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EXPOSITION

OF

THE APOSTLES' CREED

Though I am an old Doctor of Divinity, to this day I have not got beyond the children's learning—the Ten Commandments, the Belief, and the Lord's Prayer; and these I understand not so well as I should, though I study them daily, praying with my son John and my daughter Magdalen.—LUTHER'S *Table-Talk.*

THE GUILD TEXT BOOKS

Exposition

of

The Apostles' Creed

By

THE REV. JAMES DODDS, D.D.

NEW YORK CHICAGO TORONTO
Fleming H. Revell Company
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EDITORIAL NOTE

DR. DODDS' *Exposition of the Apostles' Creed* will supply a real need. It contains a careful, well-informed, and well-balanced statement of the doctrines of the Church which are expressed or indicated in the Creed, and it will be helpful to many as arranging the passages of Scripture on which these doctrines rest. Though historical references could have been easily made, the Editors agree with the author in thinking that to insert them in the discussion of doctrines would have probably perplexed the readers for whom the book is designed.

February 1896.

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PREFATORY NOTE

THE title and purpose of this Handbook limit its subject matter to an exposition of the doctrines which have place in the summary of belief termed the Apostles' Creed. It is not meant to cover the whole field of Christian doctrine.

A history of the Creed has not been attempted. There is much that is interesting in its origin and growth. It did not come into existence all at once, but was built up from time to time by the insertion of clauses formulated by Councils or by leading representatives of the Christian Church. The space available is not sufficient to include a history.

The Handbook being not controversial but expository, references to the heretics and heresies that gave occasion for the articles which have place in the Creed are few and brief.

JAMES DODDS.

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THE APOSTLES' CREED

INTRODUCTION

WHILE the disciples had Jesus with them, there was no occasion for a formal summary of the doctrines which His followers were called to accept and to maintain. He was present to resolve all doubts and settle all difficulties, so that when their faith was assailed or their teaching impugned they could refer to Him. Then, as now, faith had Him for its object,—with this difference, that He was visibly at hand to counsel and to direct, while now He is passed into the heavens and guides His people into all truth, not by personal instruction but by His invisible though ever-present Spirit.

Another reason why Jesus gave His disciples no creed may be found in the fact that His work was not finished until He had laid down His life, and that no creed could have been satisfactory which did not cover those great unfulfilled events in His history that lie at the foundation of the Christian religion.

Jesus did indeed require belief in Himself as a condition on which healing and salvation were bestowed. Unbelief hindered His work, while faith in His Messianic claims and mission never failed to secure a rich blessing to those who confessed Him. The faith which He recognised was not the acceptance and confession of a summary of doctrine such as any of the Creeds now existing, but a simple statement of belief in Himself as the Son of God and the Messiah. On one occasion only does He appea

to have called for a confession which went further than this, when, having declared to Martha the great doctrine of Resurrection, He put to her the question, "Believest thou this?"[1]

After His death and resurrection, when Jesus charged His disciples to preach the Gospel, He bade them teach their followers to observe all things whatsoever He had commanded them.[2] The Apostles, accordingly, appear to have furnished the leaders of the churches they planted with summaries of doctrine, such as we find in the fifteenth chapter of Paul's first Epistle to the Corinthians.[3] Paul seems to refer to such a summary when he writes to the Romans commending them for obedience to the "form of doctrine" which was delivered them,[4] and when he bestows his benediction on those Galatians who walked according to "this rule."[5] It was, doubtless, such a compendium of doctrine he had in view when he charged Timothy to "keep that which was committed to his trust," contrasting this "deposit" with "profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called."[6] The bearing of this charge is made more emphatic when it is repeated by the Apostle in connection with the exhortation, "Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus."[7]

It would thus appear that from Apostolic times there existed a form of words of the character of a creed, which, for some reason, came to be jealously guarded and concealed from all who were not Christians. It was perhaps Paul's reference to the summary of doctrine as a "deposit" to be carefully kept, that led the early converts to regard it as a private possession—a trust to be hidden in the heart and covered from unfriendly eyes. The Apostle did not mean that it should be so regarded, but this interpretation given to his words, or some other

[1] John xi. 25, 26.
[2] Matt. xxviii. 20.
[3] 1 Cor. xv. 1-4.
[4] Rom. vi. 17.
[5] Gal. vi. 16.
[6] 1 Tim. vi. 20.
[7] 2 Tim. i. 13, 14.

cause, led to its being used as a watchword rather than as an open confession, the consequence of which is that in the writings of the earliest Christian fathers no statement of doctrines corresponding to a creed is found.

The absence of creeds or of allusions to them in the oldest Christian treatises gives seeming point to the objection urged by Professor Harnack and others against the Apostles' Creed as now held and interpreted by the Church, that it is not a correct summary of early Christian belief. That such objections are not well founded will become apparent as the various articles of the Creed are considered in the light of Apostolic teaching. The absence of creeds in early Christian writings is sufficiently accounted for by the care with which the summary was cherished as a secret trust, to be treasured in the memory but not to be written or otherwise profaned by publicity.

The word "creed"—derived from the Latin "*credo*, I believe"—is, in its ecclesiastical sense, used to denote a summary or concise statement of doctrines formulated and accepted by a church. Although usually connected with religious belief, it has a wider meaning, and designates the principles which an individual or an associated body so holds that they become the springs and guides of conduct. Some sects of Christians reject formal creeds and profess to find the Scriptures sufficient for all purposes that creeds are meant to serve. The Christian religion rests on Christ, and the final appeal on any question of doctrine must be to the Scriptures which testify of Him: but it is found that very different conclusions are often reached by those who profess to ground their beliefs upon the same passages of the Word of God. Almost every heresy that has disturbed the unity of the Church has been advocated by men who appealed to Scripture in confirmation of the doctrines they taught. The true teaching of the Word of God is gathered from careful and continuous searching of the Scriptures, and there is danger of fatal error when conclusions are drawn

from isolated passages interpreted in accordance with preconceived opinions. It has been found not only expedient but needful that the Christian Churches should set forth in creeds and confessions the doctrines which they believe the Scriptures affirm. They are bound not only to accept Scripture as the rule of faith, but to make known the sense in which they understand it. As unlearned and unstable men wrest and subvert the Sacred Writings, it is fitting that those who are learned and not unstable should publish sound expositions of their contents. In the light of creeds, converts are enabled to test their own position, and to put to proof the claims of those who profess to be teachers of Christian doctrine.

One of the most widely accepted of these forms is the Apostles' Creed, so called, not because it was drawn up by, or in the time of, the Apostles—although there is a tradition to the effect that each of them contributed a clause—but because it is in accordance with the sum of Apostolic teaching. The history of this Creed is not easily traced. The care with which it was guarded excluded it from the writings of the early fathers, and it is impossible, therefore, to assign to their proper dates, with certainty, some of the articles of which it is composed. This, however, is evident, that it came gradually into existence, clauses being added from time to time to guard the faithful against false doctrine, or to enable them to defend the orthodox belief. It appears to have been the general creed of the Christian Church, in a form very similar to that which it now bears, from the close of the second century.[1] At that time and afterwards it served not only as a test of Christian doctrine, but was also used by catechists in training and instructing candidates for admission to the Church.

It is sometimes urged as an objection to this Creed that it is not a sufficiently comprehensive summary of Christian doctrine. Those who object to it on this ground should consider the purpose of creeds. They were

[1] See Appendix.

not meant to cover the whole field of Christian faith, but to fortify believers against the teaching of heretics. The Apostles' Creed was not intended, and does not profess, to state all the things that Christians ought to believe. There is no reference in it to Scripture, to Inspiration, to Prayer, or to the Sacraments. It sets forth in a few words, distinct and easily remembered, the existence and relations to men of the three Persons of the Godhead —those facts and truths on which all doctrine and duty rest, and from which they find development.

It is especially objected that there is no reference in this Creed to the atoning work of the Lord Jesus Christ. But, though not directly expressed, this doctrine is really and substantially contained in it. The Creed is the confession of those whose bond of union is common faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as their Saviour. The articles which treat of Him and of His sufferings and work are intelligible only to those who believe in the reality and efficacy of the Atonement.

The Creed contains twelve articles, and to each of these, and to every part of it, the words "I believe" belong. One article relates to God the Father, six to God the Son, one to God the Holy Ghost, and four to the Holy Catholic Church and the privileges secured to its members. These articles are—

1. I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth :

2. And in Jesus Christ His only Son our Lord,

3. Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary,

4. Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried,

5. He descended into hell ; the third day He rose again from the dead,

6. He ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty ;

7. From thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

8. I believe in the Holy Ghost ;

9. The Holy Catholic Church; the Communion of saints;

10. The Forgiveness of sins;

11. The Resurrection of the body,

12. And the Life Everlasting.

In estimating the value of creeds in the early ages of the Christian Church, it is important to bear in mind that the converts were almost wholly dependent on oral instruction for their knowledge of Divine truth. Copies of the Old and New Testaments existed in manuscript only. These were few in number, and the cost of production placed them beyond the reach of the great majority. A single copy served for a community or a district in which the Hebrew or the Greek tongue was understood, but in localities where other languages were in use the living voice was needed to make revelation known. It is only since the invention of printing and the application of the steam-engine to the economical and rapid production of books, and since modern linguists have multiplied the translations of the Bible, that it has become in their own tongues accessible to believers in all lands, available for private perusal and family reading. It was therefore a necessity that Christians should possess "a form of sound words," comprehensive enough to embody the leading doctrines of Christianity, yet brief enough to be easily committed to memory.

ARTICLE I

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth

SECTION 1.—I BELIEVE

THE Creed is the expression of personal belief. Whether spoken in private or in a public assembly, it is the confession of the faith held by each individual for himself. Each of us has a separate life, and each of us must personally accept God's message and express his own belief. Religion must influence men as units before it can benefit them in masses. Faith that saves is a gift of God which every one must receive for himself. The faith of one is of no avail for another, therefore the Creed begins with the affirmation "*I* believe." In repeating it we profess our own faith in what God has revealed concerning Himself.

"I *believe*."—The Apostles' Creed is a declaration of things which are most surely believed among us, and its several parts or articles are founded upon the contents of Scripture, which is our one rule of faith. It does not begin with the words *I think* or *I know*, but with the statement "I believe." "Belief" is used in various senses, but here it means the assent of the mind and heart to the doctrines expressed in the Creed. When we repeat the form we declare that we accept and adopt all the statements which it covers. "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made."[1]

[1] Rom. x. 10.

Faith differs from knowledge. There are some things which we know to be true, and there are others of which we say we believe them to be true. There are certain truths which are termed axiomatic. When the terms in which they are expressed are understood, the truth they convey is at once admitted. We know that two and two make four, we know that two straight lines cannot enclose a space; but we do not know in the same sense those things which the Creed affirms. It deals with statements that, for the most part, have never been, and cannot be, tested by sense, and that cannot be demonstrated by such proof as will compel us to accept them. We believe them, not because it is impossible to withhold our assent, nor only because nature, history, and conscience confirm them, but on the ground of testimony. "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God."[1] We believe because we are assured on sufficient and competent authority that these things are so. We know that we live in a material universe, but our knowledge does not extend to the manner in which the universe came into being. That is a matter of belief. "Through faith"—not by ocular or logical proof, but on testimony—"we understand that the worlds were framed by the Word of God."[2]

Faith differs from opinion. When a man believes his mind is made up. By whatever process it may have been reached, the conclusion commends itself as one that is fixed and irreversible. Opinion, on the other hand, is held loosely. It is based not on certainty but on probability. The possibility of error is recognised, and the opinion is readily surrendered when the grounds on which it was formed are seen to be insufficient or misleading. "A man," says Coleridge, "having seen a million moss roses all red, concludes from his own experience and that of others that all moss roses are red. That is a maxim with him—the *greatest* amount of his knowledge upon the subject. But it is only true

[1] Rom. x. 17. [2] Heb. xi. 3.

until some gardener has produced a white moss rose,—after which the maxim is good for nothing."[1]

The testimony on which faith rests is human or Divine. It is human in so far as it is based on human experience and observation. It is Divine in so far as it rests upon the direct revelation of God. Faith in man is continually exercised in business and in all the departments of life. It is necessary to the very existence of society. Faith in God moves in another sphere. Its objects are not seen or temporal, and they do not rest for proof upon the testimony of man. It receives and assents to statements which are made on the authority of God, who knows all things, who therefore cannot be deceived, and who is truth and therefore cannot deceive us. On this Divine rock of faith, and not upon her own knowledge, the Christian Church rests. "If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater."[2] Among Christian virtues faith stands first. It must precede everything else. It is the foundation on which all Christian character and life are built. "He that cometh unto God must believe that he is."[3] "Without faith it is impossible to please God."[3]

That which Christian faith realises and grasps is expressed in doctrine. Faith is not a separate and self-dependent grace. Its existence and growth arise from those things which are believed, and therefore it is necessary to study and understand, as far as we can, the doctrines of the Christian faith before we can possess or manifest belief. It is important that we should have a definite knowledge of these doctrines; that we should study them in relation to the Scriptures upon which they profess to be founded, and that we should be in a position to defend them against assailants. Thus faith will gather strength, and believers will be "ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh them a reason of the hope that is in them with meekness and fear."[4]

[1] *Table-Talk*, 1852, p. 144.
[2] 1 John v. 9. [3] Heb. xi. 6. [4] 1 Peter iii. 1

Section 2.—God[1]

The existence of God is the basis of all religious belief. If there is no God, there is no moral obligation. If there is no Almighty Being to whom men owe existence, and to whom they must give account, worship is a vain show and systems of religion are meaningless. Theologians, therefore, from the days of the first Christian apologists to our own time, have endeavoured to establish by proof the doctrine of the Divine existence. To those who accept the authority of Scripture the existence of God is a fact which no argument can overthrow; but as there are many who reject this authority, evidence has been sought elsewhere than in Scripture to establish the doctrine. The arguments for the Being of God are mainly threefold, being drawn: (*a*) from the consciousness of mankind; (*b*) from the order and design that are manifest in the universe; and (*c*) from the written revelation which claims to have come to men from God Himself.

(*a*) (*Consciousness*) There is a wonderful agreement among men as to the existence of a great invisible Being by whom the world was created and is governed, and who charges Himself with the control and guidance of its inhabitants and concerns. In a land such as our own, in which Christianity has held place for many centuries, belief in God, however it may fail to produce holy living, is almost universal. This belief exercises a strong influence, and has contributed not a little to the formation of our national character. It is an atmosphere always around us, sustaining and promoting the healthy life of those even who are the least conscious of being affected by it. The belief is indelibly impressed upon our laws, our literature, and even our everyday occupations. It is stamped upon the relations men sustain to one another. It is this which for one day weekly suspends labour that Christians may have leisure to worship God and to meditate upon the duties they owe to Him.

[1] See *Handbook of Christian Evidences*, Principal Stewart, chap. i.

It is in recognition of this that we see tall spires pointing heavenward, and churches opening their portals to the inhabitants of crowded cities and to the dwellers in scattered villages. In Christian lands the consciousness of men bears testimony to the existence of God, but it is not in such lands only that this consciousness exists and confirms belief in the Divine. In the earliest times, long before history began to be written, such a consciousness was prevalent, leading men to faith in and worship of a Being or Beings infinitely greater than themselves, present with them and presiding, though invisibly, over their destinies. The study of Comparative Religion has shown how nearly the primeval inhabitants of lands widely distant from each other were at one in the views they had come to entertain. Hymns, prayers, precepts, and traditions are found in the sacred books of the great religions of the East, and archæologists have deciphered on ancient monuments, and traced in primitive religious rites, clear evidence of belief in the existence of the Divine. The valleys of the Nile, of the Euphrates, and of the Tigris have revealed facts for the theologian's benefit that are almost exhaustless. In the Egyptian Book of the Dead, and in the religious hymns and the ritual of which they formed part in the sacred literature of Babylonia, there is proof that four thousand years ago hymns were sung in honour of the gods, and prayers were offered to propitiate them and secure their favour. But belief in God had place long before these hymns were sung or these prayers offered. This is shown by the existence of words in the most ancient hymns, prayers, and inscriptions which could not have been used unless the ideas which they conveyed had already existed in men's minds. These words—some of which are preserved in modern tongues—when traced to their roots, help greatly to explain the character of early religious thought, and prove the existence of a widely diffused belief in the Divine Being and His government. They serve as confirmation of a belief, which is in harmony with many facts, that God had revealed

Himself to humanity before He furnished the revelation which has come down to us. Words are not originated by accident. They are expressions of real existences, and before they found place in hymns or prayers the ideas which they denoted must have been matters of faith or knowledge to those who used them. Before man is found professing faith in pagan deities some idea of God must have existed in his mind. Men did not like to retain God in their knowledge, and so the idea of the Divine became perverted, and in its first simplicity was lost, and the multitude followed numberless shadows all illusory and vain. Still, there lingered remnants and traditions of belief in a Divine Creator and Governor which must have originated in such a primeval revelation as the book of Genesis records. We find there the statement that God revealed Himself to our first parents by direct intercourse. They heard and saw and talked with God. They therefore knew of the existence of God by personal perception, and the ideas they held regarding Him were founded on His own manifestation of Himself.

Closely connected with this consciousness is the sense of responsibility universally prevalent. There is a law written on the heart of every rational human being, under the guidance of which he recognises a distinction between good and evil, right and wrong. He possesses a faculty to which the name of conscience has been given, that convicts him of sin when he violates, and approves his conduct when he conforms to, its dictates. However much different peoples and different ages may be at variance in their particular ideas of what is right and what is wrong, the conception itself has place in all of them. There are certain fundamental notions as to what is just and what is unjust, what is virtuous and what is vicious, that find universal or all but universal acceptance. This power of distinguishing between right and wrong constitutes man a moral being, and separates him by infinite distance from the lower animals. To the beasts that perish there is nothing right or wrong.

They live altogether according to nature, and have no responsibility. Man stands in a different relation to the Lawgiver who bestowed on him the faculty of conscience and impressed on his soul a conviction that he will have to give account for all his actions. The Being to whom he must give account is God.

(*b*) (*Order*) Another ground of this belief is the order manifest in the universe. There is a symmetry that pervades all material things of which we have knowledge. Part is adapted to part; objects are accurately adjusted to each other; "wheels within wheels" move smoothly; every portion fits into and works in harmony with every other portion without discord or jarring. It is unthinkable that these effects should be due to chance or to a cause that is without intelligence. The perfect arrangement of parts that work together must have been planned by a living Being of infinite wisdom, knowledge, and power. This Being, whose creatures they are, must exist. Behind the pervading order there must be personality, purpose, and action. The fool may say in his heart, "There is no God," but, as nature bears testimony to the existence of an omniscient and omnipotent Creator, reason calls for another conclusion.

(*c*) (*Scripture*) There is a limit to the knowledge of God which the consciousness of man and the order and design in the universe impart. These serve to establish the truth that God is, but they do not convey the intimation that He is a moral Governor and the rewarder of them that diligently seek Him. They declare little of His character, and are silent as to many of the duties which He requires. To make God known, the teaching of conscience and of reason must be supplemented by revelation. It is in the Bible that the believer finds the strongest proofs of the existence of the Divine Being, and from the Bible he obtains also the most comprehensive and satisfying view of the Deity and of man's relation to Him. He there finds that what he has to believe concerning God is, that He is Jehovah—the Being infinitely and eternally perfect, self-existent, and

self-sufficient; the only living and true God, there being none beside Him. The heathen believed in and worshipped many gods. The untutored savage peopled the groves with them, and the pagan philosopher built innumerable temples in their honour. The Pantheons of Greece and Rome were crowded with the statues of favourite deities. The doctrine of one living and true God was prominent in the revelation given to Israel. God's message by Moses had its foundation-truth in the proclamation: "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord."[1] His glory and His work are shared by no other being. He is the absolute Sovereign and Lord of all creatures. In the Bible, too, man learns that God is his own personal God who cares for him, and to whom he owes love, allegiance, and obedience. All who refuse to believe in the existence of God reject the testimony of Scripture regarding Him, but to such as acknowledge its claim to be the Word of God, the evidence it supplies is convincing and all-sufficient.

Examination of ancient heathen religions and of the views they set forth regarding God shows clearly the distance at which they stand from the revelation of Scripture. The gods of the heathen were of like passions with their worshippers—selfish, cruel, vindictive, and without regard for equity or justice in their treatment of men. The God of the Bible, on the other hand, is a righteous God, merciful to His creatures, and desirous of their temporal and eternal wellbeing, and when He inflicts suffering it is not as a passionate Judge, but as a Father who chastens His children for their profit.

The doctrine of the Trinity of Persons in the Godhead, though not expressly stated in the Creed, is implied in the clauses which refer to each of the Persons who compose it. There is one God, but in the Godhead there are three Persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, whose names indicate the relation in which each stands to the others.

[1] Deut. vi. 4.

Each of the Persons is complete and perfect God. While there are three Persons in the Godhead, the same in substance, equal in power and glory, these three are one. The doctrine thus stated is termed the doctrine of the Trinity. This word is not found in Scripture, but the truth which it expresses is set forth there, dimly in the Old Testament, distinctly in the New. In the first chapter of Genesis the word "God" is in the Hebrew a plural noun, and yet it is used with a singular verb, thus early seeming to intimate what afterwards is clearly made known, that there is a plurality of Persons, who yet constitute the one living and true God. The same indication of plurality in unity appears in the account of man's creation: "Let *us* make man."[1] This doctrine of the Trinity is essentially one of revelation. Natural religion testifies to the existence, the personality, and the unity of God, but fails to make known that the unity of God is a unity of three Persons. The doctrine does not contradict reason, it is above reason.

It is sometimes said that the doctrine of the Trinity involves a contradiction in affirming that three Persons are one Person. This charge misrepresents the doctrine. Trinitarians do not say that Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are three Persons in the sense in which three men are three individuals. They believe that there is one God, and that Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are yet so distinct that the Father can address the Son, the Son

[1] Gen. i. 26; iii. 22; xi. 7. Different views have been taken of these passages. Some commentators think the plural forms represent the plural of majesty. There is, however, no indication in the Old Testament or in ancient monumental inscriptions that sovereigns had adopted this style of speech. Nebuchadnezzar and Darius begin their proclamations with the singular first personal pronoun "I"; not with the plural "We" which modern kings assume. On the Moabite stone Mesha uses "I," not "We," throughout the inscription in which he records his achievements. Another view is that Moses, accustomed to hear of the numerous gods of Egypt, used the plural inadvertently. This supposition does not accord with any view of inspiration held by evangelical churches. The interpretation which regards the passages as early indications of the doctrine of the Trinity is simple and natural, and accords with the principle of gradual revelation which is apparent in Scripture.

can address the Father, and the Father can address and send the Spirit. God's ways are not as our ways. He is not a man that He should be limited by the conditions of human relationships. When we say there are three Persons in the Godhead, we use a word applicable to men, which, though the most fitting one at our disposal, must come far short of fully describing the relations of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost to each other. Possessing no celestial language, we cannot fully describe or understand heavenly things.

Section 3.—The Father

The first Person in the Godhead is the Father. This name may be viewed (*a*) with reference to the second Person, Jesus Christ His only Son, or (*b*) as descriptive of His relation to believers in Christ Jesus, or (*c*) as indicating His universal Fatherhood as the Author and the Preserver of all intelligent creatures. The relation in which the Father stands to the Son, that He is His Father and has begotten Him, is one that we cannot explain. Any attempt to do so must be arrogant and misleading, for who "by searching can find out God"?[1] Secret things belong unto God, but revealed things unto us and our children.[2] The term "Father" is a relative one and involves the idea of sonship. No one who accepts the teaching of Scripture can doubt that the Father is God. The statements as to His attributes and universal government are so many and so strong that, but for other affirmations regarding Deity, we should naturally conclude that the Father alone is God. But the very name "Father" corrects such a view, and when we search the Scriptures we find it untenable. God is our Father, but He was "the Father" before He called man into being. From all eternity He was Father. As from everlasting to everlasting He is God, so from everlasting to everlasting He is Father. He did not become Father

[1] Job xi. 7. [2] Deut. xxix. 29.

when His Son assumed human nature, but is such in virtue of His eternal relation to the Word as the Son of God. It is the Son's existence that constitutes Him Father; and that existence was in eternity. "I and my Father are one,"[1] is the Son's testimony to His eternal Sonship; and when He prays His Father to glorify Him, He asks to be glorified with the glory which He had with Him before the world was.[2] There are other senses in which the first Person of the Godhead is termed Father. All men are declared to be His offspring, and those who have received the Spirit of adoption cry, "Abba, Father," and are taught, when they pray, to say, "Our Father."

In an exposition of the Creed the Fatherhood in relation to men generally, or to believers in particular, need not be considered. Here the name is used to indicate the relation in which the First Person stands to the Second, in virtue of which alone those who are adopted into fellowship with the Son become the children of God —the children of Christ's Father and their Father. The Scriptures teach that the Father is God, that the Son is God, and that the Holy Ghost is God. At the same time the doctrine of the Divine Unity is affirmed.

The difficulty felt in connection with the doctrine of Trinity in Unity has led to attempts in ancient and modern times to show that those passages of Scripture in which it appears to be taught may be otherwise interpreted. One explanation is, from the name of its first exponent, termed Sabellianism, or, the doctrine of a Modal Trinity. The view which it presents of the Divine Being is that the same Person manifests Himself at one time and in one relation as Father, at another time and in another relation as Son, and at a different time and in another relation as Holy Ghost. It attributes divinity to this One Divine Person in each of His manifestations, but denies that there are three Persons in the Godhead. The facts of Scripture do not accord with such a view of the Divine Personality. We find

[1] John x. 30. [2] John xvii. 5.

each Person addressing the Others and speaking of Himself and of Them as distinct Persons. Each speaking of Himself says "I." The Father says "Thou" to the Son, the Son says "Thou" to the Father, and the Father and the Son use the pronouns "He" and "Him" with reference to the Spirit. The Father loves the Son, the Son loves the Father, the Spirit testifies of the Son.[1]

In the Athanasian Creed we find the following statement of this doctrine:—

"This is the Catholic Faith, that we worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity. Neither confounding the Persons nor dividing the Substance. For the Person of the Father is one, of the Son another, of the Holy Ghost another. But the divinity of the Father and the Son and of the Holy Ghost is one, the glory equal, the majesty equal. Such as is the Father, such also is the Son, and such the Holy Spirit. The Father is uncreated, the Son is uncreated, the Holy Spirit is uncreated. The Father is infinite, the Son is infinite, the Holy Ghost is infinite. The Father is eternal, the Son is eternal, the Holy Ghost is eternal. And yet these are not three eternal Beings but one eternal Being. As also there are not three uncreated beings, nor three infinite beings, but one uncreated and one infinite Being."

It is sometimes said that the doctrine of the Trinity is of little practical importance, but such a view of it is inconsistent with the teaching of Scripture, and with the atoning work of Christ. It is the Divinity of the Son that gives efficacy to His sacrifice. As sinners we need pardon. Pardon must be preceded by propitiation, and if Christ is not Divine there is no propitiation. The doctrines of Scripture are so linked together that the rejection of one invalidates the others. If we deny the Trinity we deny the Gospel message of salvation, and we accordingly find that most of those who reject the doctrine of the Trinity do not believe in the reality and efficacy of Christ's atonement.

[1] See Hodge's *Systematic Theology*, vol. i. p. 444.

Section 4.—Almighty

The term "Almighty," which occurs twice in the Creed, represents two Greek words, the one denoting absolute dominion, the other infinite power in operation. When we say that God the Father is Almighty, we affirm that He is possessed of entire freedom of action, and that His power is unlimited. He cannot, indeed, act in opposition to His own nature. In executing His eternal decrees none can stay His hand from working, but He can do nothing that would derogate from His eternal power and Godhead. Such inability has its origin not in any limitation of power, or restriction imposed from without, but in Himself. He knows all things and so cannot be tempted of evil. He can do whatever He wills, but His will cannot contradict His character.

The statement that God is Almighty implies that all beings are governed and controlled by Him. All things, save Himself, are His creatures and subject to Him. Even those things that seem to resist and defy His authority are under His government. Rebellion serves but to make His omnipotence more apparent, for He causeth the wrath of man to praise Him, and the remainder of wrath He restraineth.[1] He so governs the universe that all things work together, and work together for good to them that love Him.[2]

When we say, "God the Father Almighty," it is not meant that the Son and the Holy Ghost are not Almighty. The Father is Almighty because He is God, the Son, who is one with the Father, is God and therefore Almighty, and the Holy Ghost is also God and therefore Almighty. In the unity of the Godhead the same attributes mark the three Persons.

Section 5.—Maker of Heaven and Earth

Belief in the Almighty power of God is further declared by a confession of faith in Him as the Maker of

[1] Psalm lxxvi. 10. [2] Rom. viii. 28.

heaven and earth, and this is but a repetition of the statement contained in the first chapter of Genesis—the only account of Creation which is fitted to solve all difficulties and to meet all objections. "Maker" in this article is used in the sense of Creator, implying that heaven and earth were called into existence out of nothing by the word of Divine power; and by "heaven and earth" are meant all creatures, visible and invisible, that have existed or do exist.

Those who object to the Scripture statements regarding Creation have maintained views as to the origin of the material universe differing largely from those held by persons who accept this article of the Creed, and differing also greatly from one another. Various solutions have been given, among which may be stated:—

(*a*) The view of those who hold that all phenomena and all existence originate in Chance or a blind fortuitous concourse of atoms. To state such a doctrine is to refute it. No one possessed of reason can believe in his heart that Intelligence did not create and organise matter, or that the material universe, with all its adaptation of parts, was evolved, and is governed, by chance or accident. This theory, if it is worthy of the name, seems to have been devised in order to evade the idea that man is subject to Divine government.

(*b*) Another view is that all existence owes its origin to Fate or Necessity and is now held in its resistless grasp. The advocates of this theory are at variance among themselves. One school maintains that all things existed from eternity in their present condition, and are destined to continue as they are, controlled by relentless and undeviating necessity. Another school—the ancient Fatalists—held that at first there was a fortuitous concourse of atoms and phenomena, until Fate or Chance decided the present order, which became an established necessity. A third class hold doctrines of Development. Some of them agree with the ancient Fatalists in maintaining that development, in a fortuitous concourse and action of matter and force, issued in evolution or

originated a course of evolution. Others again deny fortuitous concourse and affirm that this process of evolution had no external beginning, but has continued from eternity under the control of evolutionary law. The term "law" as used by them has no specific meaning, and is simply an adaptation, to a theory naturally atheistic, of a word which may serve to commend their doctrine. The "law" of which they speak has its origin in matter itself, and is not under the control of a Supreme Intelligence. That this is the fact is shown by the denial of free-will in man and of the superintending providence of God; of the efficacy of prayer and of the forgiveness of sin; and by the prominence given in their writings to the absolute control of all things by undeviating, unchanging law.

(*c*) A third view affirms that while there is a distinction between the Ego and the non-Ego (the me and the not-me), it is impossible to know anything about either in its essence. That they exist and that they are different are facts within our knowledge, but as to the absolute nature of mind and matter we can discover and believe nothing. The ultimate or absolute is beyond our reach, as is the infinite and unconditioned. We can have no knowledge of First Causes, or of the Ultimate Cause, or of the Absolute Cause. The infinite cannot even be apprehended, and those who undertake to learn or to speculate regarding the infinite engage in a task beyond their powers. Such knowledge is not practical. The term "God" is merely an expression for a mode of the unknowable, conveying no meaning to those who use it. The view thus expressed originated in concessions unhappily made by certain writers, as Sir William Hamilton and Dean Mansel, who, thinking to defend revealed religion, taught that reason cannot know the Infinite, and that therefore the Infinite must reveal Himself. Herbert Spencer took advantage of this concession, and carried it to a logical conclusion, when he argued that, if reason could not know or apprehend the Infinite by reason, neither could it by revelation.

(*d*) Another class hold the view which is termed

Pantheism. They affirm that in matter and force alone infinite absolute being has existence, and that existence is void of consciousness or will, but, of necessity, subject to development, such development being eternal in its nature and duration. The philosophies of the East are at one with many of the phases of the modern Western theory of evolution. As eternal progression would have produced perfection, which it has not, the Pantheistic Brahmin evades the difficulty by imagining a theory of cycles, through a series of which everything that exists, the universe itself included, runs without cessation, and, having completed the course, returns to its starting-point and begins the race anew. Similar expedients to escape the same difficulty are employed by Theosophists and other modern Pantheistic theorists, who, likewise, invent cycles that begin in chaos and close with a catastrophe in which all existence is reduced to chaos, from which a new cycle is begun. To Pantheists God is the universe and the universe is God. God, they say, is not sun or moon, ocean or mountain, wind or rain, man or beast, but these are all passing modifications of God. Such philosophies destroy all distinction between sin and virtue, by making all phenomena a part of the Infinite; and since the Infinite comprehends all being and phenomena, freedom and responsibility cannot exist.

(*e*) The preceding theories are essentially atheistic, the idea of a Creator not being accepted by their advocates and exponents; but some Theists and Christians hold the theory of evolution in a modified form. Their view is that the Creator endowed matter and force with certain powers, in accordance with which everything that exists has been evolved. He gave to matter and force a self-evolving energy, subject to certain laws, under whose operation all things came into being. Some maintain that the immediate action of the Creator was confined to the first constitution of things, while others extend His action sufficiently to bridge over certain chasms, such as those which separate inorganic from organic matter, lifeless from living matter, vegetable from animal

life, and the lower animals from man. Even of those who believe in matter and force as eternal and self-existent some admit that Creative Intelligence was needed to bridge over such chasms, and that Mind operated from the first. Others concede a larger interposition of Creative Power. They think that all things came into existence by direct creation, but that when His work was finished the Creator left it to be guided and controlled by the laws and constitution He had given to it. The relation of the Creator to His work was no closer than that of the watchmaker to the watch that has passed out of his hands. The material universe is a machine, not self-originated indeed, but automatic, undirected, and uncontrolled in action.

It is thus evident that those who hold the doctrine of evolution differ widely with regard to the extent of its operation. Some of them are agnostics, and some who term themselves monists deny all spiritual or immaterial existence. On the other hand, there are evolutionists who hold the doctrine, not as a belief which of itself accounts for the universe, but as an explanation of the manner in which Creative power is manifested and the Divine Will accomplished. It is felt by those who thus regard the theory that the problem of the origin of life is insoluble if Creative interposition is not accepted as the explanation. Darwin never withdrew even from the last edition of the *Origin of Species* the statement of his belief that life may have "been originally breathed by the Creator into a few forms, or into one," and some who are evolutionists even accept the Mosaic account of Creation as in harmony with their opinions.

The Creed in this article does not specify any particular view as to the method, duration, or order of the work of Creation. It calls us to believe that matter is not eternal, that, unlike God, it was created, and that He alone called it into being. Those who refuse to accept the simplicity of the Scripture statement that "in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth," fail to explain satisfactorily how the world did originate. Other

cosmogonies than that of Moses, whether contained in the sacred books of religions that have long existed, or professing to be based on modern scientific discovery, raise difficulties that are insuperable. Whence came matter if not from the creative word of God? To assign eternity to it is to invest it with an attribute that is Divine, and Pantheists carry such an explanation to its logical conclusion when they affirm that the universe is God. The existence of a single atom is an unfathomable mystery. Man cannot create or destroy even a particle of matter. How overwhelming, then, if we reject the simple statement of the Bible, is the mystery of the great universe, in whose extended space suns, planets, stars, and systems unceasingly revolve, and in which our own world is but a little speck. All things created point to God as their origin and source. "The invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead."[1]

"I asked the earth," wrote Augustine in his *Confessions*, "and it answered me, 'I am not He.' And whatsoever things are in it confirmed the same. I asked the sea and the deeps and the living creeping things, and they answered, 'We are not thy God, seek above us.' I asked the morning air, and the whole air with its inhabitants answered, 'Anaximenes was deceived, we are not thy God.' I asked the heavens, sun, moon, stars, 'Nor,' say they, 'are we the God whom thou seekest.' And I replied unto all the things which encompass the door of my flesh, 'Ye have told me of my God that ye are not He: tell me something more of Him.' And they cried out with a loud voice, 'He made us.'"[2]

[1] Rom. i. 20. [2] *Confessions*, Bk. x. chap. vi.

ARTICLE II

And in Jesus Christ His only Son our Lord

Section I.—And in Jesus Christ

THE first article of the Apostles' Creed has numerous adherents. Jews and Christians are at one in affirming their belief in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth. Many too who, unlike Jews and Christians, have not been favoured with a written revelation, have yet risen to the conception of such a Divine Being as that article sets forth. Mohammedans believe in an Omnipotent Creator, and many thoughtful heathens have accepted and maintained the doctrine as an article of faith. It expresses a conviction reached by Plato and Aristotle, by Seneca and Epictetus, and is a truth proclaimed by Old Testament prophets and New Testament saints. No belief regarding things invisible is more generally professed.

It is otherwise with the second article of the Creed, "I believe in Jesus Christ His only Son our Lord," which expresses doctrines so hotly disputed that they prove the saying true, "This child is set for a sign which shall be spoken against."[1] It is rejected by the Jew and the Mohammedan, and finds opponents in many who profess to accept the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as a Divine revelation, and to regard the exemplary life of Jesus as a model to be copied, while they deny His Divine origin, His sacrificial death, and His universal authority.

[1] Luke ii. 34.

The early controversies concerning the Second Person of the Trinity were disputes regarding His nature and the relation in which He stands to the Father. Certain heretics affirmed that Jesus was a mere man, selected by God and specially endowed with the gift of His Spirit. Others maintained that Christ was not God, but a created spirit, nearest to the Father in dignity, who took upon Him human nature, and, having finished the work appointed Him on earth, went up again to God the Father. One class, the Ebionites, regarded Him as a being essentially human, though begotten of the Spirit, by whom He was anointed above measure; while another, the Docetæ, regarded Him as a Divine Being seemingly bearing human form and united with the man Jesus. These views were finally rejected by the Catholic Church, because they conflicted with the Word of God which affirms the true Divinity of the Son of God, the true humanity of the Son of Man, and the true union of the two natures of God and man in One Person, Jesus Christ.

The Gnostics, who were the leaders in connection with such heretical views, are generally thought to date from the time of Simon Magus. He had been enrolled as a disciple of the Apostles, and, professing faith in Christ, was baptized by Peter. But he had joined the Christian Church for selfish ends,[1] as Luke's statements show. Hymenæus,[2] Phygellus, and Hermogenes,[3] referred to by Paul in his second letter to Timothy, are believed to have been Gnostics, and towards the close of the first century Cerinthus and Ebion extended the system.[4]

Section 2.—Jesus

Jesus is the personal name of our Lord. In ancient times names had often a meaning and importance which they do not carry now. "Name" means a word by which any person or thing is known, and names were originally given from some quality or attribute inherent

[1] Acts viii. [2] 2 Tim. ii. 17. [3] 2 Tim. i. 15.
[4] See *Landmarks of Church History*, by Professor Cowan, D.D., p. 16.

in the person or thing to which they were attached. Proper names among the Hebrews had a deeper meaning and a closer connection with character and condition than elsewhere. The care that marks the Scriptures in recording the origin of names of individuals and places, the frequent allusions to names as having a special relation to character or qualities, the solemnity with which a change of name is stated as marking an epoch in the history of individuals or nations, and the frequency with which names are associated with great events, with promises, threats, or prophecies, show the importance that was attached to them. This feature is most marked in the use by the Jews of the word "Name" in reference to God. The "Name of the Lord," or an equivalent expression, constantly occurs to denote God Himself. His Name is in Scripture identified with His character, marking His attributes and His nature as distinguished from all other beings. The Name, Jehovah, by which God revealed Himself to Moses was so closely identified by the Jews with the Divine Personality and Holiness that it was never pronounced by them.

In Old Testament times the Deliverer foretold as the object of faith and hope and love under the Gospel Dispensation was announced by a declaration of His name. "His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace."[1] Immediately before He appeared a messenger was sent from heaven with the Divine command, "Thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins."[2] The name is thus not the ascription to Him of qualities evolved from our own conception of what He is, or of what God is in Him, but God's disclosure of His infinite love and of His purposes for man's salvation. In His Divine power and by His efficacious sacrifice He is Jesus, the Saviour. He does not save, as some who profess to be Christians hold, by the influence of His own example and teaching only, just as one man may be said to save another whom he persuades to

[1] Isaiah ix. 6. [2] Matt. i. 21.

abandon evil habits and form good ones. He is our Saviour because He died as a sacrifice for our sins. Had He not expiated our guilt by dying for us, His example, teaching, and sympathy would never have brought us salvation.

The name "Jesus" is a human name. In its Hebrew form Joshua, Jehoshua, Hosea it had been borne by others. We read of one Jesus in the New Testament[1] and of many in the pages of Josephus. In this respect, as in other particulars, Jesus was "made like unto his brethren" and bore a human distinctive name. "Jesus" was accordingly the name given to Him at His circumcision, by which He was to be known in His family and among the people of Nazareth. During His ministry He was described as "Jesus, the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee";[2] and the title affixed to His cross by Pilate was "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." Yet, as if to make emphatic the truth that His humanity did not derogate from His Divine power and Godhead, the first Evangelist, who describes the angel's visit, quotes in immediate connection Isaiah's prophetic announcement, "They shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, GOD with us."[3] In the name Jesus thus bestowed we have the announcement of Himself as a personal Saviour from sin, in its power and consequences. Of those who had borne it before Him some were raised up to deliver the people of their nation from suffering in time, but He came to be man's everlasting Saviour. "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."[4] It is important therefore to bear in mind that Jesus is a name not only given to Him by God, but a name itself Divine; not only the name by which, as that of a Mediator, we worship God, but the name under which, as that of God Himself, we worship Him. "God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,

[1] Col. iv. 11. [2] Matt. xxi. 11. [3] Matt. i. 23. [4] Acts iv. 12.

of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."[1]

Section 3.—Christ

In ancient times no such appellations as those now termed surnames were given to individuals. One name only was distinctive. Both among the Jews and among the Greeks this system of nomenclature prevailed, family names being unknown. It was different with the Romans, by many of whom more names than one were borne. In reading ancient Greek history, we find illustrious personages known by one name only, as Plato, Aristotle, Socrates, Solon. The same feature marks early Jewish history. Abraham, Isaac, Moses, Job were not known by any other names than these. Sometimes names were changed or modified in order to express some speciality of character or achievement—Abram to Abraham, Jacob to Israel, Hoshea to Joshua. In later times appellations descriptive of the work or office of individuals were attached to their original names, as in the cases of John the Baptist, of Matthew the Publican, and of our Lord Himself, Jesus the Christ. This latter practice prevailed in early English history, and famous kings appear bearing descriptive epithets in addition to their original single names—Alfred the Great, Edward the Confessor, William the Conqueror.

Christ is not a proper name but an official title. Although now often used to designate the person of the Lord Jesus, it was not so when He lived in the world. As John was the Baptist or Baptizer, Jesus was the Christ—the Anointed. The title is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew Messiah, and means the Anointed. It denotes that He who bore it was separated, consecrated, and invested with high office. These distinctions met in Jesus, rendering the title appropriate.

At the time of the birth of Jesus, the coming of a

[1] Phil. ii. 9-11.

great deliverer was at once the desire and the expectation not of Jews only, but of many nations. Roman historians of that period tell us that a redeemer was to make his appearance from among the nation of Israel. This belief was no doubt spread abroad by Jewish exiles, who, scattered through many lands, carried with them the hopes and prophecies which had been given from time to time to their own people.

That the expected Messiah had come to the world bearing with Him from heaven a message of salvation was the cardinal doctrine of Apostolic preaching. To accept Jesus as the Christ was to accept Him as the Saviour and Deliverer. When Andrew found his brother Simon he said to him, "We have found the Messias."[1] "Is not this the Christ?"[2] was the appeal of the woman of Samaria to the people of her city; and the confession of Peter that Jesus was the Christ, was declared by our Lord to be a revelation not of flesh and blood, but of His Father in heaven.[3] Not Apollos only, but Paul and the other inspired teachers also, set it before them as their appointed work, "to show by the Scriptures that Jesus was Christ."[4] To confess that Jesus was the Christ was an acknowledgment that in Him were vested all those attributes and qualities which the Old Testament Scriptures ascribed to Messiah, that Jesus of Nazareth was the Deliverer of whom the prophets testified, to whose coming all the holy men of old looked forward, whom prophets and kings desired to see, and of whom all Scripture bore witness. It was the acknowledgment by the common people that Jesus was Messiah that stirred the indignation of the Jewish rulers. They saw that, if this were conceded, all His claims must be held valid, and accordingly the Sanhedrim passed a resolution to the effect that, "if any man did confess that Jesus was Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue."[5]

The name "Christ" denotes the offices which Jesus

[1] John i. 41. [2] John iv. 29. [3] Matt. xvi. 16, 17.
[4] Acts xviii. 28. [5] John ix. 22.

executes as our Redeemer. Three classes were set apart by anointing—the Prophet, who made known the will of God; the Priest, who confessed sin and offered sacrifice for the people; and the King, who acted as their leader and commander. Jesus was consecrated for His work as our Redeemer by anointing, but not, so far as we know, with material oil. He who anointed Him was God the Father, and the oil that descended upon Him was the Holy Ghost, of whose influence oil was the symbol. "God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows."[1] He fulfilled the office of a Prophet by revealing the Father, and making known the will of God for our salvation; of a Priest in the sacrifice of Himself which He offered up to God for us, and in the intercession which He makes on our behalf at His Father's right hand; of a King in the victory He won over man's enemies, and in the power He imparts to His people, by which they overcome evil in themselves and in the world. It was not until after He had finished His work that His followers so closely associated Him with the Messiahship as to speak of Him not as Jesus only, nor as Christ only, but as Jesus Christ. This twofold name occurs very rarely in the Gospels—once in Matthew, once in Mark, never in Luke; but in the Epistles it is the name by which He is designated and made known to the world. To believe in Jesus Christ is to accept Him in all His offices, and to take home the truth which John had in view when he penned his Gospel: "These are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name."[2]

Section 4.—His only Son

God is love. Love must have an object, and from eternity the Father was not alone. The only-begotten and well-beloved Son was with Him, dwelt in His bosom, and shared His glory. The Filiation or Sonship

[1] Psalm xlv. 7; Heb. i. 9. [2] John xx. 31.

of our Lord follows the statement of His proper name and the declaration of His Messiahship. It is expressed in the designation, "Only Son," which is His divine name, peculiar to Himself, incommunicable to any other being. He is the Son of the Father, and is His only Son inasmuch as He alone partakes of His Divine nature, and in this nature is the Son. The Old Testament Scriptures foretold that Christ should be the Son of God. "I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee."[1] Isaiah wrote of Him, "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace."[2] The New Testament in various passages bears the same testimony. "In the beginning," says John, "was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God"; and "the Word," he goes on to say, "became flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father,) full of grace and truth."[3] The writer to the Hebrews makes a similar declaration: "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; who is the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person."[4] It has been noted that Christ, in speaking to His disciples, never says *our* Father, but either *My* Father, or *your* Father, or both conjoined, never leaving it to be inferred that God is in the same sense His Father and our Father. It appears from various passages in the New Testament, that when He came the Jews identified Messiah with the Son of God, as when Nathanael exclaimed, "Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel";[5] and when Martha said, "I believe that thou art the Son of God, which should

[1] Psalm ii. 7. [2] Isaiah ix. 6. [3] John i. 1, 14 (R.V.).
[4] Heb. i. 1-3. [5] John i. 49.

come into the world."[1] He did not first become the Son of God when He took upon Him the nature of man. The Divine Sonship existed in the beginning before He was the child of Mary, the seed of the woman. He was the Son of God before the birth of Abraham: "before Abraham was I am."[2] Though John the Baptist was older than Jesus, and preceded Him in His ministry, Jesus was yet preferred in honour before him, "for he was before him." "The Lord possessed him in the beginning of his way, before his works of old."[3] In the relation of the Son to the Father, there is a mystery which we cannot solve. "Who shall declare his generation?" Earthly figures fail to set forth Divine realities, and as we are dependent upon human emblems for the conceptions we form of heavenly things, we see through a glass darkly. But though we cannot fully understand the sense in which our Lord is the Son of God, we yet believe that He is so in a manner analogous to that in which we are our fathers' sons—possessing the same nature as His Father, and having that nature communicated to Him as the only-begotten Son. God has other sons. Angels are termed sons of God. Men are also His offspring, and believers are now the sons of God; but Jesus is God's son in a higher, special, and perfect sense.

That Jesus claimed to be in this sense the Son of God is clear from many incidents in His history. It was ostensibly on the ground that He declared Himself to be "equal with God" that He was arrested and condemned by the Jewish rulers. The high priest put the question to Him directly and solemnly, "I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God." The reply was distinct and emphatic. "Jesus said, I am: Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven."[4] There is no resisting the meaning which these words convey. The Sonship

[1] John xi. 27. [2] John viii. 58.
[3] Prov. viii. 22, 30. [4] Matt. xxvi. 63; Mark xiv. 61.

they assert is very different from that which is implied when a mere man who fears God and keeps His commandments is said to be a son of God. It was a claim to the possession of Divine personality and power, and was so understood by His accusers. When Caiaphas heard the reply he accepted it in its full significance, tearing his clothes and exclaiming, "He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy. What think ye? They answered and said, He is guilty of death."[1]

His saying that He was the Son of God was the "blasphemy" for which He was condemned. The horror, real or affected, and the rent robes of the high priest, the verdict of the court, and the contemptuous treatment to which Jesus was afterwards subjected, leave no room for doubting that He declared Himself to be the Son of God, having at His disposal the powers of heaven and earth.

Section 5.—Our Lord

The last title of the Second Person is expressive of His dominion. The name "Lord" is the translation of a Greek word, which signifies ruling or governing. Jesus Christ is not only a Lord, He rules by authority and in a sense peculiar to Himself; so that He is commonly spoken of in the New Testament as "the Lord": "Come, see the place where the Lord lay";[2] "They have taken the Lord out of the sepulchre";[3] "I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you."[4] In the time of Christ the title "Lord" had for Jews and Jewish Christians a special personal meaning. "The Lord" was in the Septuagint, as it is still in the Authorised English version of the Old Testament, the translation of "Jehovah." When, therefore, the Apostles used this title to designate their Master, there is reason to think that they did so in the full belief that He was one with the Father. This view is confirmed by Paul's statement: "To us

[1] Matt. xxvi. 65, 66.
[2] Matt. xxviii. 6
[3] John xx. 2.
[4] 1 Cor. xi. 23.

there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him."[1] As Lord, the government is upon His shoulders, His dominion is universal and His kingdom everlasting. This He claims for Himself: "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth";[2] "All things are delivered unto me of my Father";[3] "The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand."[4] "God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."[5]

While Christ is the "Lord of all,"[6] the Creed yet sets forth the truth that there is a special sense in which He is the Lord of believers, "our Lord."

Scripture recognises the existence in the universe of two great armies, marshalled under their respective leaders—one under the rule of Jesus Christ, the other under His adversary the Devil, otherwise termed Satan, Apollyon, and the Old Serpent. These powers are in constant antagonism, and every man takes his place in the army of Christ or in that of Satan. Those opposed to the Lord are rebels who, except they repent, must share the doom of their leader in the place prepared for the devil and his angels; "for He must reign until He hath put all His enemies under His feet." He is their Lord for their overthrow and destruction; while to those who are "with Him,"—"the called, and chosen, and faithful,"[7]—He is their Lord to secure for them victory and everlasting salvation. When we use the expression "our Lord," we declare that we renounce other masters; that we make no compromise with His enemies, and refuse to have "fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness"; that, renouncing the Devil and his works, rejecting the vain

[1] 1 Cor. viii. 6. [2] Matt. xxviii. 18. [3] Matt. xi. 27.
[4] John iii. 35. [5] Phil. ii. 9-11. [6] Acts x. 36.
[7] Rev. xvii. 14.

pleasures, pomps, and glories of the world, and denying ourselves the gratification of sinful desires, we accept Christ as our leader, with the determination expressed by the prophet, "O Lord our God, other lords beside thee have had dominion over us: but by thee only will we make mention of thy name."[1] As the followers and subjects of an omnipotent, righteous King we shall strive to "bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ."

It is noteworthy that a plural pronoun is used in this recognition of Christ as *our* Lord, while elsewhere throughout the Creed the confession of belief is personal, "I believe." The plural form here indicates that while in following Jesus we are separated from the world, we are gathered into the fellowship of the saints, and are members of the whole family in heaven and earth.

[1] Isaiah xxvi. 13.

ARTICLE III

Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary

THE Creed proceeds to declare belief in the doctrine of the Incarnation, which is thus set forth in the Shorter Catechism: "Christ, the Son of God, became man, by taking to Himself a true body, and a reasonable soul, being conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost, in the womb of the Virgin Mary, and born of her, yet without sin."[1]

Two Evangelists record the miraculous birth of Jesus. Mark and John do not refer to it, and their silence has led some opponents of Christianity to discredit the statements of Matthew and Luke. But while there is no direct account given by Mark or John of the miraculous conception and birth of Jesus, the fact of His Divine descent is implied in many portions of their Gospels. The words with which Mark opens his narrative clearly express it, "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God";[2] as does the statement he makes that at His baptism there came a voice from heaven saying, "Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."[3] John is equally explicit in declaring his belief in the Divinity of Jesus. The opening words of his Gospel assert His Divine nature: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made."[4]

It is evident, therefore, that each of the Evangelists

[1] Ques. 22. [2] Mark i. 1. [3] Mark i. 11. [4] John i. 1-3.

believed in the Divine origin of Jesus, for they would not have used such language regarding one who in their opinion was a mere man, the son of Joseph the carpenter and of Mary his espoused wife. Matthew, who wrote for Jewish converts, shows how fully the Old Testament prophecy was accomplished that Christ should be born, not at Nazareth but at Bethlehem, and especially that Isaiah's prophecy, "Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, GOD with us,"[1] was fulfilled in the birth of Jesus Christ. Luke, who is termed by Paul "the beloved physician," gives the fullest account of the Nativity. His writings are characterised by minuteness of detail and historical accuracy. Recent investigations have shown that, even in regard to matters about which he was long thought to have been mistaken, Luke's statements are strictly correct.[2]

The story of the miraculous conception would not, without the strongest corroborative evidence, have commended itself to a man of his acumen and his calling. A physician by profession, the companion of Apostles, and possessing singular penetration and sagacity, he tells us that he had received the facts he narrates from eye-witnesses and competent authorities. For information as to the events connected with the birth of her Son, Luke would naturally have recourse to Mary. There is evidence in his Gospel that he had intimate knowledge of her private thoughts and actions.[3] Lange, in his *Life of Jesus*, finds in the specialties of the narrative evidence of a woman's diction.[4] Be this as it may, the minuteness of detail, the message of the angel Gabriel, the preservation of the sacred songs, and of the thoughts and words of the Virgin, justify the belief that Luke received his information from herself. When we find him assuring his friend Theophilus that he himself had perfect under-

[1] Isaiah vii. 14.

[2] See *The Origin and Connection of the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke*; and *The Voyage and Shipwreck of St. Paul*, by Mr. Smith of Jordanhill.

[3] Luke i. 29; ii. 19, 51.

[4] Vol. i. p. 376.

standing of all things from the very first, the inference is natural that his information was obtained from the most trustworthy sources. There is no reason to doubt that Mary was associated with the Apostles of her Son, and had opportunities of imparting information regarding Him which no other could supply. Luke's account corresponds with that of John, to whose care Jesus from the Cross committed His mother, and who from that time "took her unto his own home."[1]

It does not necessarily follow, even if the information was supplied by Mary, that it is therefore to be accepted as true. Human witnesses are not infallible or invariably honest, and it is conceivable that Mary may have been a dreamer or a deceiver. This article of the Creed, contradicting as it does the ordinary course of nature, stands in need of more than a historic statement. Jesus admitted that if His claims had been supported by no other evidence than His own word, the Jews would have had excuse for hesitating to accept Him. "If," said He, "I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true,"[2] and therefore He appealed to the testimony borne to His Messiahship by His Father, by John the Baptist, by His miracles, and by His life. All the evidence by which the Divine nature and mission of Jesus were accredited goes to support the account of His supernatural birth.

That Jesus was born of Mary is a plain historic truth to which all must accord belief. "Yes," said Renan, who did not regard Christ as the Son of God, "this story of Jesus is no fable, but a true history. Christ really lived." The miraculous birth was a fulfilment of prophecy. When the angel told Mary that the child to be born of her would be the Son of God, he cited Isaiah's prophecy for the confirmation of her faith; and indeed the same truth had been foreshadowed when the promise was given to Eve that her seed should bruise the head of the serpent. The first Adam had no human father. He was the Son of God. It was therefore fitting that

[1] John xix. 26, 27. [2] John v. 31.

the second Adam should resemble the first in this respect, being in a sense infinitely higher than our first father the Son of God, His only Son. It was fitting too that He who was to assume the nature, not of any branch of the human family but of universal man, should be conceived by the Holy Ghost. Other faiths than Christianity are limited in their adaptation to races. The religion of Mahomet is not practicable save in Eastern latitudes. The Koran enjoins as duties practices that cannot be carried out in Western countries. The faiths of Brahma and Buddha find followers only under Eastern skies, and even Judaism required observances which could be rendered at Jerusalem only. All faiths but Christianity are narrowed down by the nationalities of their founders or adherents. It is otherwise with the religion of Jesus of Nazareth. He came from God with a mission and a message for the world. In comparison with the severe requirements of the law and the grievous exactions of religions devised by men, His "yoke is easy and His burden is light." With Him there is "neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free."[1] With Him there are no distinctions of sect, or country, or caste. "In every nation he that feareth God and worketh righteousness is accepted with him."[2]

In being born, Jesus assumed the nature of humanity, and, in so doing, more than restored to man the likeness to God which our first parents lost, for themselves and their descendants, through the Fall. He thereby made it possible for God to dwell with man, and for man to rise into communion with God. Sin had effaced the Divine image, and no other than the Son of God could give back to men the power to reflect in their own lives the character of God. His possession of the human nature gives us confidence in approaching Him, by assuring us of His brotherhood and sympathy; while His possession of the Divine nature assures us that He can make His brotherhood and sympathy effectual.

[1] Col. iii. 11. [2] Acts x. 35.

ARTICLE IV

Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried

Section 1.—Suffered under Pontius Pilate

THE preceding articles of the Creed appeal to faith. They so far transcend reason that they can be apprehended only when reason is sustained by faith. This article, which affirms that Jesus "suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried," is a simple historical statement. Pilate is a historic person, the details of whose life are recorded, not in the Gospels only, but in secular history. Josephus records several incidents in the life of Pilate which are strikingly in accordance with his character as set forth in the Gospels. Tacitus, a Roman historian, who wrote his *Annals* soon after the crucifixion of Jesus, relates that, while Pilate was governor of Judæa, Jesus Christ was put to death. The testimony of the Gospels and the statement of the Creed are thus confirmed by the Roman and the Jewish historians. But, indeed, the event itself is not the subject of controversy. It is the conclusions drawn from it by the followers of Christ that are disputed. "Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks foolishness,"[1] still raises opposition and kindles hostility.

The name of Pilate is inserted not with the view of branding him with infamy, but in order to fix the date of the crucifixion of Jesus. It is the only intimation of the

[1] 1 Cor. i. 23.

time of His death that the Creed contains. It states that He was born, and that His mother was the Virgin Mary, and beyond this reference to Pilate there is no intimation as to the time of the nativity or the death. Bishop Pearson writes :—"As the Son of God, by His deliberate counsel, was sent into the world to die in the fulness of time, so it concerns the Church to know the time in which He died. And because the ancient custom of the world was to make computations by the governors, and refer their historical relations to the respective times of their government, therefore, that we might be properly assured of the actions of our Saviour which He did, and of His sufferings,—that is the actions which others did to Him,—the present governor is named in that form of speech which is proper to such historical or chronological narrations when we affirm that He suffered under Pontius Pilate."[1] From stating the birth of Christ, the Creed passes by what at first sight may seem an abrupt transition to His suffering, crucifixion, and death. There is no reference to His life or works, though these differed so widely from those of ordinary men. The reason seems to be that the end for which He came into the world was to suffer and die. Although He spake as never man spake, and did the works no other man did, it was not in the first place to teach or to work miracles that He emptied Himself of His glory and came to earth, but in order to suffer and die in the room and stead of sinners. Others had been prophets and teachers, others had worked miracles, others had done good in their day and generation, but none save Jesus had come in his own name or wielded power so marvellous as His. No one could share with Him the work of suffering and dying for sinners. He was lifted up that He might draw all men unto Him. "He suffered the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God."[2] On the cross He tasted death for every man, and made a sacrificial atonement for the sins of the world. "He was wounded for our transgressions, he

[1] Pearson *On the Creed*, vol. i. p. 337. [2] 1 Peter iii. 18.

was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed."[1] His dying was the leading thought and purpose of His life. Those who were with Him fixed their eyes on His greatness as manifested in His wisdom and miracles, and looked for His setting up a kingdom of this world, but He Himself from the very beginning knew that the path to be traversed by Him was one of agony and death. He was straitened until this baptism of suffering should be accomplished.[2] At His first Passover He had intimated that, as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so the Son of Man should be lifted up. He used this expression "lifted up" three times, and an Evangelist gives the explanation: "This he said, signifying what death he should die."[3] Again and again He told the disciples that He had come to give His life a ransom for many, that He was to be betrayed and killed, that as the Good Shepherd He would give His life for the sheep.[4] He intimated that His death was in accordance with the deliberate counsel and foreknowledge of His Father, and with His own free and full assent: "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life."[5] And when betrayal and apprehension brought His ministry to a close, He would allow no sword to be drawn in His defence, but was brought as a "lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth."[6]

The views which the Jews entertained with regard to the triumphant progress of Messiah did not accord with the statements of their prophets. The sacred writers who foretold His coming pointed indeed to victory as the ultimate issue of His mission, but they also clearly associated His life with conflict and suffering. From

[1] Isaiah liii. 5. In this chapter, which all the earlier Jewish authorities understood to refer to Messiah, there are no fewer than eleven expressions which clearly describe the vicarious character of these sufferings. See *Speaker's Commentary, in loco.*

[2] Luke xii. 50.

[3] John xii. 33.

[4] Matt. xx. 28; xvii. 22; xxvi. 2; John x. 11.

[5] John x. 17.

[6] Isaiah liii. 7.

the first intimation of a Deliverer, which spoke of a heel bruised by man's malignant adversary, there was indicated in every type and prophecy the truth that Messiah was to be "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief," whose triumph was to be achieved through suffering. The expectation current among the Jews that deliverance would be wrought by Messiah, without humiliation or suffering, showed that they misinterpreted the messages of the prophets. Familiar with the letter, they failed to grasp the spirit of the prophetical writings. Jesus laid this ignorance to their charge when He said to them, "Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures";[1] and He upbraided the two disciples on the way to Emmaus because they had failed to discover that their Redeemer's glory was to be won through conflict: "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into His glory?"[2]

The suffering which Jesus endured was both bodily and spiritual. Persecution followed Him as a babe: Herod sought to slay Him, and Joseph and Mary had to flee into Egypt.[3] He was "despised and rejected" by His countrymen. His claims were refused by His kinsmen. He "endured the contradiction of sinners."[4] He "took our infirmities and bare our sicknesses." He hungered and thirsted and was weary; He was spit upon, buffeted, and scourged. The cross on which He was to suffer was laid upon His shoulders, till His exhausted frame broke down; and on Calvary a thorny crown was set upon His brow, and the cruel nails pierced His hands and His feet. But the sorrow within His soul was worse to bear than bodily suffering. Travail of soul was the consummation of His afflictions, and while we do not read of a groan wrung from Him by bodily torture, soul-trouble led Him to ask His Father with "strong crying and tears," as His frame was agonized and His sweat was like drops of blood—"If it be possible,

[1] Matt. xxii. 29.
[2] Luke xxiv. 25, 26.
[3] Matt. ii. 13-15.
[4] John i. 11; John vii. 5; Heb. xii. 3.

let this cup pass from me."[1] As man's Saviour Jesus was made perfect through suffering.[2] "We have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."[3] The world is full of suffering, and He alone can understand and sympathise with it who has experienced it. It is the knowledge that their Divine Saviour is their Brother-man that gives to believing sufferers boldness and confidence as they draw nigh to the throne of grace.

SECTION 2.—WAS CRUCIFIED

Prophecy in the sense of prediction is a very interesting and important branch of Christian evidence. Old Testament prophets foretold minute events in the history of the Lord Jesus Christ, such as His lineal descent, the place and time of His birth, its miraculous character, His death, His burial, His three days' sojourn in the sepulchre, the casting of lots for His raiment, the piercing of His hands and feet, His last exclamation, His resurrection and ascension. Whatever view may be taken as to the dates of the various books of Scripture, it must be admitted that the whole body of the Old Testament was in circulation among the Jews hundreds of years before the birth of Christ. There can be no doubt that these prophecies were separated by great distance in time from the events predicted. Even the Septuagint Version, which is a Greek translation from the original Hebrew Scriptures, existed at Alexandria about two hundred years before His advent.

One of the most striking features of Old Testament prediction is its bearing upon the closing scenes of Christ's history. In its types as well as in its prophecies His death was foreshadowed, and the humiliating and ignominious treatment to which He was subjected minutely described. The predictions involved events that appeared contradictory and paradoxical until their

[1] Matt. xxvi. 39. [2] Heb. ii. 10. [3] Heb. iv. 15.

fulfilment furnished the key. He Himself told the disciples again and again that He should be crucified. This form of execution was a Roman punishment reserved for slaves and the vilest criminals; and the fact that Jesus was subjected to it depended on a combination of events which no mere human sagacity could have foreseen. It required that, though he should be apprehended, accused, tried, and found guilty by Jews, His death-sentence should be inflicted by Gentiles; that the Roman governor of Judæa should, against his better judgment, surrender to the clamorous cry of a mob who demanded that the prisoner should be crucified. It required that the betrayal and condemnation of Jesus should take place during the Passover week, when it was unlawful for the Jews to put any man to death. The excuse of the Jewish rulers, that they could not inflict death, did not mean that this power had been withdrawn from them, but that it was against their law to exercise it then. Had the season been different, had the Jews themselves carried out the sentence of death, it would have been accomplished not by crucifixion, but by stoning. Such an execution would not have fulfilled prophecy or have been associated with the ignominy that marked the Roman death-penalty. Thus the Scripture was fulfilled in Him, "Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree."[1] There is but one explanation that meets these facts, which is that they were directed by the counsel and foreknowledge of God, and that holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

The death of Jesus by crucifixion fulfilled in a wonderful manner the types and figures of the Old Testament. He applied the type of the brazen serpent to His death on the cross on which He was to be lifted up, and from which He was to exercise His healing power on those whom sin had bitten. The surrender of Isaac by Abraham, when he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, prefigured the unspeakable gift by the Father, who spared not His own Son, and the self-

[1] Gal. iii. 13.

surrender of the Son, who gave Himself for us. As Isaac went forth bearing the wood on which he was to be offered, he was a type of Him who went forth from Jerusalem to Calvary bearing His cross. Had His sentence been any other than death by crucifixion, He would not have come under the doom which required that a prisoner should bear his cross. The Paschal Lamb, of which not a bone was to be broken, prefigured the Antitype in His exemption from the treatment to which the two thieves crucified with Him were subjected. In crucifixion He was numbered with the transgressors and associated with accursed criminals, and so prophecy received fulfilment.

It is a standing testimony at once to the reality of Christ's suffering, and to the power which He exercises over men's minds and consciences, that from being associated with shame and scorn, the sign of the cross has been elevated to the highest place of honour and dignity. Through his reverence for Jesus, Constantine the Great, the first Christian Emperor of Rome, abolished crucifixion. It is recognised that through Christ's death upon the cross man obtains all that makes life precious. Instead of being regarded with scorn, a cross is the coveted emblem now of valour and exalted achievement. The instrument wherewith capital punishment was inflicted on abandoned criminals has come to be an ornament of monarchs. Such a change is to be explained only by the fact that it is the sign of Christ's redeeming sacrifice, and that to multitudes who glory in the Cross, He who suffered the painful death on Calvary is the "power of God and the wisdom of God unto salvation."

Section 3.—Dead

The death of Jesus Christ was the result of His being crucified. When He died, the great sacrifice for the sins of the world was accomplished. Death was necessary for the completion of His work, and this was the fact most prominent in Old Testament type and prophecy.

"Without shedding of blood is no remission,"[1] and it was to His death as the procuring cause of salvation that the Apostles directed their converts. To the Corinthians Paul wrote, "I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures."[2] It was necessary that the lamb which formed the chief part of the Passover meal should be slain, and so Messiah was brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and when John saw Him in vision it was as a Lamb that had been slain.[3] It is the death of Jesus that we commemorate in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. The bread represents His body "broken for us"; the wine, His blood which was "shed for many for the remission of sins."[4] "We are reconciled to God by the death of His Son."[5] "We have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins."[6] Statements such as these fail to convey any meaning if Christ did not really die on the cross, or if salvation comes to us in any other way than through His death as an atoning sacrifice. Of the reality of the death there is abundant evidence. It is recorded that, after six hours of suffering on the cross, Jesus gave up the ghost. The soldiers did not break His legs as they did in the case of the malefactors, because they saw and pronounced Him dead already; but one of them inflicted a spear-wound with a force that would have caused death had any life remained. The result was an outflow of blood and water, of itself sufficient evidence that death had done its work upon the Sufferer. Before Pilate permitted the body of Jesus to be delivered to Joseph, he was careful to make sure, by questioning the centurion in charge, that the wonderful prisoner who had caused him so great anxiety was dead. Thus Messiah was cut off, but not for Himself. He stood in the room and stead of sinners, and, though Himself without sin, He tasted death for every man. "He was delivered for our offences." "The Lord laid on him the

[1] Heb. ix. 22. [2] 1 Cor. xv. 3. [3] Rev. v. 6.
[4] Matt. xxvi. 26, 28. [5] Rom. v. 10. [6] Col. i. 14.

iniquity of us all." His death was not the result of unavoidable circumstances, for it pleased the Lord to bruise Him; and His sacrifice was voluntary, for He said, "I lay down my life . . . no man taketh it from me."[1] The penalty of death which He endured did not pertain to Him but to those for whom He died. "He bore our sins in his own body on the tree."[2] We are "justified by his blood."[3] "God hath set him forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God . . . that he might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus."[4] "Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men to justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous."[5]

In the statement that Jesus Christ "was dead," the Creed affirms the reality of Christ's death in opposition to certain early heretics, the Docetæ, who said that His death was not real but only apparent. A similar view has been adopted by some modern writers, who assert that what the witnesses of the crucifixion saw was not death but a swoon, from which, through the ministry of His disciples, Jesus was restored after He had been taken down from the cross. It is urged in support of this view that a crucified criminal did not usually die as Jesus is said to have died, six hours after He was crucified, but lingered on for days, before being relieved from his sufferings by death. Jesus' legs were not broken by the soldiers, because they believed Him to be dead, but—say those who deny the reality of the death—the soldiers were mistaken, the seeming lifelessness was not real, and recovery soon followed, so complete that He was able to appear in public on the third day.

In considering this statement, we must take into

[1] John x. 17, 18. [2] 1 Peter ii. 24. [3] Rom. v. 9.
[4] Rom. iii. 25, 26. [5] Rom. v. 18, 19.

account the physical condition of Jesus when He was crucified. On the night of His betrayal, and after His apprehension, He had been subjected to intense suffering in body and to sorrow of soul such as human thought cannot conceive. In Gethsemane He had passed through an experience of agony from which He must have risen weakened, to endure new forms of suffering. He had been scourged by Roman soldiers, whose cruel loaded weapons inflicted wounds that left deep scars upon His flesh and caused intense pain and exhaustion. His hands and feet had been fixed to the cross with nails. He had been crowned with thorns and mocked and hooted by a reckless mob. He had been hurried from the Sanhedrim to the Judgment-hall, and had carried the cross until He sank beneath its weight. He had for six hours endured intense suffering from pain and thirst, and when, after a strong Roman soldier had thrust a spear into His side, He was taken down from the cross, and declared by the centurion and his company to be dead, He was laid without food, and remained for two nights and a day, in a cold rock-sepulchre, whose door was barred by a great stone, sealed, and guarded by soldiers. Suppose for a moment that Jesus had survived this terrible ordeal of suffering, and that, having eluded His Roman guard and His Jewish persecutors, He had again entered into Jerusalem, it must have been as a weak, disabled invalid, not as a man possessing normal strength and vigour. Yet on the third day He showed Himself alive, bearing no traces of the suffering He had endured except the marks of His wounds. The feet that had been pierced bore Him from Jerusalem to Emmaus, a journey of threescore furlongs; and He passed from place to place with a swiftness of movement and a superiority to obstacles that filled the disciples with amazement.

In the light of these facts, the view we have been considering is utterly untenable. It is no matter for wonder that Jesus, after such exhaustion, died six hours after He had been lifted up on the cross. The circumstances which preceded His dying are not consistent

with the opinion that while in the sepulchre He recovered from a swoon. It is not possible to conceive that a man, wounded and bruised—His hands, feet, and side pierced with nails and spear—could appear so soon, bright and radiant, strong and vigorous, undistressed by pain or weakness, and possessing power of movement not only restored, but marvellously augmented. If Jesus was not really "dead," no explanation can be given of His disappearance from history. If He had really lived as a man after His crucifixion, we should have looked for a fresh outbreak of persecution directed against Him. We have His own testimony by the Spirit, "I am he that liveth, *and was dead.*" [1]

Section 4.—And Buried

Isaiah thus prophesied regarding the burial of the Messiah: "He was cut off out of the land of the living . . . and he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death." [2] In ordinary circumstances, the body of a crucified person would not have received burial. It was the Roman custom to leave the bodies of slaves and criminals, who alone were subjected to this punishment, suspended on the cross, a prey to beasts and birds, and when these and the elements had done their work upon the flesh, the remains were ignominiously cast out. The Jews, who inflicted capital punishment not by crucifixion but by stoning, did not thus deal with the bodies of malefactors; but, as the law directed, gave them burial on the night of execution.[3] The presence of dead bodies in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem during the Passover festival was regarded as a defilement, and steps were taken to have those of Jesus and the malefactors removed. The Jews could not themselves dispose of the bodies, because they would have sustained pollution by contact with them, and also because they had made over to the Romans the execution of the death-sentence. "The Jews therefore, because

[1] Rev. i. 18. [2] Isaiah liii. 8, 9. [3] Deut. xxi. 22, 23.

it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the Sabbath day, (for that Sabbath day was an high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away."[1] This request was granted, but, through the interposition of Joseph, a rich man of Arimathæa—to whom, as a member of the supreme council, the resolution for the removal of the bodies would be known—that of Jesus escaped the ignominious treatment to which the others were subjected. He came and went in boldly unto Pilate and craved the body of Jesus, securing for it an honourable burial such as the Jews had not contemplated. Pilate "gave" the body to Joseph, and he bought fine linen, and took Him down and wrapped Him in the linen and laid Him in a sepulchre, which was hewn out of a rock.[2]

It was a new sepulchre, "where never man had yet lain."[3] In Joseph's holy task there was associated with him Nicodemus, who brought costly spices wherewith to embalm the body, "as the manner of the Jews is to bury." The disciples of Jesus do not appear to have shared in this work, which was watched from a distance by certain women from Galilee, who followed and saw where He was laid. They, too, made ready spices and ointment with which to honour the body of the Lord; but when they came to the tomb on the morning of the first day of the week, they found it empty, for Jesus had risen. It is not without meaning that the tomb in which the body of Jesus was laid was a new one. It was thus impossible to affirm that any other than He had opened a way out of its dark recess, the conqueror of death.

Such was the wonderful combination of circumstances that led to the fulfilment of Isaiah's prophecy, "He made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death." The Jews desired that He should be buried with the wicked. When they besought Pilate to remove the bodies, they wished that Jesus and the malefactors should be laid together. If the Jewish rulers had not parted

[1] John xix. 31. [2] Mark xv. 46. [3] Luke xxiii. 53 (R.V.).

with their right to dispose of the bodies, the three who had been crucified together would have been consigned to the burying-ground set apart for the interment of Jewish criminals; but it was the Divine decree that Jesus should make His grave with the rich, and therefore the event was so overruled that the bodies of Jesus and the malefactors were at the disposal not of the Jews, but of the Roman governor, who delivered the body of Jesus to the rich Joseph. While, therefore, Jesus was executed in such a way that, but for the intervention of the Jews and Pilate and Joseph, He would have been buried with criminals, "he made his grave with the rich in his death." Thus He who had humbled Himself in dying was honoured in His burial. Joseph and Nicodemus were timid men. The one was a secret disciple and the other, through fear of the Jews, came to Jesus by night. Though members of the Sanhedrim, they had lacked courage to defend Jesus when He was under trial; but now, grown bold, they identified themselves with Him.

The sepulchre was carefully watched. The Jews, thinking that they might hear something about the resurrection of Him whom they called "that deceiver," went to Pilate and made known their fear that the disciples would steal His body and say that He had risen from the dead.[1] The Roman governor made light of their apprehension, and said to them, perhaps sarcastically, "Ye have a watch: make it as sure as ye can." "So they went, and made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone, and setting a watch,"[2]—proceedings which eventually furnished strong confirmation of the reality of Christ's death, burial, and resurrection.

[1] Matt. xxvii. 63, 64. [2] Matt. xxvii. 65, 66.

ARTICLE V

He descended into hell; the third day He rose again from the dead

Section 1.—He Descended into Hell

IT is somewhat startling to find in the Creed this statement regarding our Lord, "He descended into hell." The clause, which was one of the latest admitted into the Creed, was derived from another creed known as that of Aquileia, compiled in the fourth century. It does not appear in the Nicene Creed, but it has a place in the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England, where we read, "As Christ died for us, and was buried, so also it is to be believed that He went down into Hell." The Westminster Divines, who gave the Creed a place at the close of their Shorter Catechism, appended a note explanatory of the clause to this effect, "That is, continued in the state of the dead, and under the power of death, until the third day."

The word "hell" is used in various senses in the Old Testament. Sometimes it means the grave, sometimes the abode of departed spirits irrespective of character, sometimes the place in which the wicked are punished.

In the English New Testament, also, the word "hell" has not in every place the same meaning. It represents two different nouns in the original Greek—Gehenna and Hades. *Gehenna* was the name of a deep, narrow valley, bordered by precipitous rocks, in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem, which had been desecrated by human sacrifices in the time of idolatrous kings, and

afterwards became the depository of city refuse and of the offal of the temple sacrifices. The other noun, rendered by the same English word *Hell*, is *Hades*, which means "covered," "unseen" or "hidden." *Hades* is the abode of disembodied spirits until the resurrection. The Jews believed it to consist of two parts, one blissful, which they termed *Paradise*—the abode of the faithful; the other *Gehenna*, in which the wicked are retained for judgment. Lazarus and Dives were both in Hades, but separated from each other by an impassable gulf, the one in an abode of comfort, the other in a place of torment.[1]

As long as the spirit tabernacles in the body there are tokens of its presence in the visible life which is sustained through its union with the body. But when it departs from its dwelling-place in the flesh, death and corruption begin their work on the body. Death is complete only when the spirit has departed, and it is probable that this statement in the Creed was meant to express in the fullest terms that Christ's death was real. As man He had taken to Himself a true body and a reasonable soul, and when His body was crucified and dead, His spirit passed, as other human spirits pass at death, into Hades. It is not without a meaning that we read, "When Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he gave up the ghost."[2] Ghost is simply spirit, and in His case, as in that of every man, there was a true departure of the soul from the body at death. It was with His spirit that His last thought in life was occupied. He knew that though it was to depart from the battered, bruised tabernacle of His body, it was not to pass out of His Father's sight or His Father's care. "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit,"[3] were His last words on the cross.

The descent into hell is not referred to in the Westminster Confession, but in the Larger Catechism this statement is found: "Christ's humiliation after His death consisted in His being buried, and continuing in the state of the dead, and under the power of death, till

[1] Luke xvi. 19-26. [2] Mark xv. 37. [3] Luke xxiii. 46.

the third day, which hath been otherwise expressed in these words, 'He descended into hell.'"[1] What the Westminster Divines meant was, that while Christ's body was laid in the grave, His spirit passed from the visible to the invisible world; that, as He shared the common lot of men in the death and burial of His body, so He shared their common lot in passing as a spirit into the abode of spirits. The statement of this clause follows naturally what is said of the body of Jesus in that which precedes it. As His body was crucified, dead, and buried, so His spirit passed into the abode of spirits. "In all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren."[2]

Those who maintain that the spirit of Christ descended into hell in a sense peculiar to Himself, ground their opinion upon certain passages of Scripture. Psalm xvi. 10—"Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; nor wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption"—is quoted in support of this opinion, but does not really justify it. It expresses the confidence of the speaker, that God will not deliver His soul to the power of Sheol (the Hebrew word equivalent to the Greek Hades), or suffer His body to see corruption; and in this sense the passage is quoted by Peter, as a proof from prophecy of the resurrection of Christ. Ephesians iv. 9 is also regarded as giving sanction to this view—"Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth?" By the "lower parts of the earth" some understand parts lower than the earth, but such a view rests on a strained interpretation of the passage. Paul's argument is that ascent to heaven must have been made by one who, before ascending, was below. Christ had come down from heaven to earth, and was below: therefore, he argues, Christ is the subject of the prophecy he has quoted. He it was that had ascended up on high, not the Father, who is everywhere.[3]

In Isaiah xliv. 23 we have corroboration of this view: "Sing, O ye heavens . . . shout, ye lower parts of the

[1] Ques. 50. [2] Heb. ii. 17. [3] John iii. 13.

earth." Here "lower parts" means simply the earth beneath; that is, beneath the heavens.

The most difficult and important passage bearing on the clause is 1 Peter iii. 18, 19: "Being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the spirit: by which also he went and preached to the spirits in prison." In the Revised Version the rendering is not "by" but "in," "which" referring to the word "spirit,"—not the third Person of the Godhead, but the human spirit of Jesus—in which spirit, separated from the body yet instinct with immortal life, He went and "preached to the spirits in prison," or rather to the spirits in custody. The passage marks an antithesis between "flesh" and "spirit." In Christ's "flesh" He was put to death. His enemies killed His body, but His soul was beyond their power. His body was dead, but in the abode of souls His "spirit" was alive and active.

So far there is here simply the statement that our Lord's disembodied spirit passed to Hades; but the Apostle adds that He "preached to the spirits in prison," and it is inferred by some that He preached repentance, but this is an assumption for which there is no Scripture warrant. We are not told what was the subject of Christ's preaching. He had finished His work on earth, had atoned for sin, had overcome death and conquered Satan. Even angels did not fully know the work of grace and salvation which Christ accomplished for man, and it is not likely that the spirits of departed antediluvians and patriarchs understood its greatness. The least in the Kingdom of Heaven knows more than the greatest of patriarchs or prophets knew. While in the flesh they had seen His day afar off, and, as disembodied spirits, they knew that Messiah by suffering and dying was to work out their redemption; but before the work was finished neither men nor angels understood the mystery of it, and what is more likely than that the completion of His redeeming work was first made known to them in the spirit by the Redeemer Himself? If we accept this view, the preaching to the spirits in prison

was the intimation to those already blessed, who had while on earth repented and believed, that Messiah by dying had brought in everlasting salvation for His people.

There is still a difficulty in Peter's words. Christ is said to have preached to those who were disobedient in the days of Noah. Peter says that in the writings of Paul there are some things hard to be understood, but what he himself writes regarding Christ's work in Hades is also difficult, and the passage has found a great variety of interpretations. It would seem to imply that Christ in the spirit carried a special message to the antediluvians who had been disobedient and had perished in the Flood. What that message was we are not told, and human conjecture may not supply what the Spirit of God has seen fit to conceal. While the passage is a difficult one, the inference is not warranted which some have drawn from it, that those who are disobedient to Christ and reject His Gospel may, though they die impenitent, nevertheless obtain salvation after death. The plain teaching of Scripture is that it is appointed unto men once to die, and after that the judgment.[1] And whatever the statement of Peter may mean, it does not sanction belief in purgatory or in universal restoration. Romanists teach that the department of Hades to which the spirit of our Lord descended was that in which dwelt the souls of believers who died before the time of Christ, and that the object of His descent was the deliverance and introduction into heaven of the pious dead who had been imprisoned in the *Limbus Patrum*, as they term that portion of Hades which these occupied. This they say was the triumph of Christ to which Paul refers in Ephesians iv. 8, when, quoting the 68th Psalm, he tells us that He ascended up on high, leading captivity captive.

According to the Romanists, Hades consists of three divisions—heaven, hell, and purgatory. Heaven is the most blessed abode reserved for three classes of per-

[1] Heb. ix. 27.

sons :—1st, Those Old Testament saints whose spirits were detained in custody until Christ arose, when they were led out by Him in triumph; 2nd, Those who in this life attain to perfection in holiness; and 3rd, Those believers in Christ, who, having died in a state of imperfection, have made satisfaction for their sins and receive cleansing through endurance of the fires of purgatory. Hell is the abode of endless torment, where heretics and all who die in mortal sin suffer eternally. Purgatory is supposed to complete the atonement of Christ. His work delivers from original sin and eternal punishment, but satisfaction for actual transgression is not complete until after the endurance of temporal punishments and the pains of purgatory. The Church of Rome claims the right to prescribe the nature and extent of such punishments, and having devised a complicated system of indulgences, penances, and masses, professes to hold the Keys of Heaven and to possess authority to regulate penalties and obtain pardon for the living and the dead. Such claims are unfounded and false. God alone can forgive sin, and He recognises only two classes—the righteous and the wicked—here and hereafter; and only two everlasting dwelling-places—heaven and hell. The Romanist doctrine has no authority in Scripture, but is of heathen origin, being derived from the Egyptians through the Greeks and Romans, and having been current throughout the Roman Empire. Its effect has been the aggrandisement and enrichment of the papal priesthood and the subjection of the people. It contradicts the Word of God, which declares that there is no condemnation to the believer in Christ Jesus; that he hath eternal life; that for him to depart is to be with Christ, to enjoy unalloyed, unending blessedness. Protestants, therefore, hold that "the souls of believers are at their death made perfect in holiness, and do immediately pass into glory."[1]

Between those who hold the doctrine of purgatory and believers in universal restoration, there is not a little in

[1] S. C. Ques. 37.

common. Universalists reject the Atonement, and say that God always punishes men for their sins. The wicked must expect to suffer in the next world, but the mercy of God will follow them, the punishment endured will in time effect deliverance, and the result will finally be the restoration of all to purity and happiness. They thus maintain with regard to all, what Romanists hold respecting those who pass to purgatory, and both are to be answered in the same way. We cannot make satisfaction, and we need not, for Jesus has borne "our sins in his own body on the tree."[1] By this "one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified"; so that "there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries."[2]

This clause has place in the Creed as a protest against the heresy of Apollinaris, a Bishop of Laodicea, who taught that Christ did not assume a human soul when He became incarnate. He thus denied the perfect manhood of Christ, and in support of His doctrine appealed to the fact that the Scripture says,[3] "The Word (in Greek, Logos) was made flesh," "God was manifest in the flesh," while it is never said that He was made spirit. He sought to establish a connection between the Divine Logos and human flesh of such a kind that all the attributes of God passed into the human nature and all the human attributes into the Divine, while both together merged in one nature in Christ, who, being neither man nor God, but a mixture of God and man, held a middle place. His heresy found many supporters, though it was promptly met by Gregory Nazianzen, who showed that the term "flesh" is used in Scripture to denote the whole human nature, and that when Christ became incarnate He took upon Him the complete nature of humanity, untainted by sin. Only thus could He be qualified to become man's Saviour, for only a perfect man can be a full and complete Redeemer. Man's spirit, his most noble

[1] 1 Peter ii. 24. [2] Heb. x. 14, 26, 27.
[3] John i.; 1 Tim. iii.

element, stands in need of redemption as well as his body, for all its faculties are corrupted by sin.

In affirming that Jesus descended into hell, this clause of the Creed declares that He possessed the complete nature of humanity; that His true body died, and that His reasonable soul departed to Hades.

SECTION 2.—THE THIRD DAY HE ROSE AGAIN FROM THE DEAD[1]

On the morning of the first day of the week, thenceforth hallowed as the Lord's Day—the Christian Sabbath—the soul of Jesus left Hades, and once more and for ever entered the body, and formed with it the perfected humanity of the "Word made flesh." The resurrection of Jesus is a well-attested fact of history. The close-sealed, sentinelled sepulchre, the broken seal, the stone rolled away, the trembling guard, the empty tomb, and the many appearances of Jesus to the women, the disciples, the brethren, and last of all to Saul of Tarsus, prove that He had risen.[2]

The Resurrection was a fulfilment of Old Testament

[1] See Principal Stewart's *Handbook of Christian Evidences*, chap. vi.

[2] Jesus appears to have shown Himself during the forty days after His Resurrection at least ten times, viz.—

1. To Mary Magdalene, Mark xvi. 9; John xx. 11-18.
2. To two disciples, Mark xvi. 12; Luke xxiv. 13-32.
3. To Peter on same day, Luke xxiv. 34; 1 Cor. xv. 5.
4. To ten Apostles, Thomas only being absent, John xx. 19-25.
5. To all the Apostles, Mark xvi. 14; John xx. 26-29; 1 Cor. xv. 7.
6. To the women at the sepulchre, Matt. xxviii. 9, 10.
7. To the Apostles, and at this time probably to five hundred others, on a mountain in Galilee, Matt. xxviii. 16-20; 1 Cor. xv. 6.
8. To seven disciples at Tiberias, John xxi. 1-24.
9. To James, 1 Cor. xv. 7.
10. To the Apostles at His Ascension, Mark xvi. 15-18: Luke xxiv. 44-50; Acts i. 4-8; 1 Cor. xv. 7.

These seem to be all the appearances recorded, but there were probably many others, Acts i. 3. After His Ascension He appeared to Saul of Tarsus, Acts ix. 3-18; 1 Cor. xv. 8. He was seen by Stephen also, Acts vii. 55, 56.

prophecy. Peter thus interprets Psalm xvi. 10, "For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption," affirming that David in that Psalm speaks of the Resurrection of Christ.[1] Jesus Himself often foretold, both figuratively and directly, His own resurrection, as when He spoke of the coming destruction of the Temple, and connected it with the death and resurrection of His body;[2] or when He told the disciples that in a little while they should not see Him, and again in a little while they should see Him.[3] The place which this doctrine holds in the Christian faith is shown by the numerous references to it in the Epistles.

The Apostles had not grasped the statements of Christ in such a way as to lead them to look with confidence for His return, or to gather hope of His resurrection. On the contrary, they did not expect His resurrection, and, when they heard of it, they could not believe it to be real.[4] Yet, convinced by the evidence of their own senses, they came to hold it fast as the fact that crowned all their hopes in life and death. Although the preaching of "Jesus and the Resurrection" exposed them to persecution and martyrdom, they nevertheless continued to proclaim a risen Lord. "If Christ is not risen," says Paul, "then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain,"[5] and he goes on to admit that if the Resurrection had not taken place, he was altogether mistaken in the view of God's character set forth in his preaching and epistles. Peter makes a similar statement: "We are begotten again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ."[6] It is His victory over death that confirms the truth of His claims. He is proved to be the Son of God by His resurrection from the dead.[7] So important a fact was it

[1] Acts ii. 25-32. [2] John ii. 19. [3] John xvi. 16.
[4] For proof of this, see Mark xvi. 1; Luke xxiii. 56 and xxiv. 1; Luke xxiv. 11; John xx. 9; John xx. 11-18; Luke xxiv. 13-32; Mark xvi. 13; Luke xxiv. 37, 41; John xx. 25; Mark xvi. 14; Matt. xxviii. 17.
[5] 1 Cor. xv. 14. [6] 1 Peter i. 3. [7] Rom. i. 4.

regarded in connection with their work, that when they met to select a successor to Judas in the apostolic college, it was held to be essential that no one should be appointed who was not able to testify that he had seen the risen Lord.[1] Paul regarded this doctrine as so necessary, that he made it the basis of faith and salvation: "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved."[2]

The life of Paul is an unanswerable argument for the truth of the Resurrection. Not only did he preach this as the central doctrine of Christianity; he maintained it at the cost of all that, before his conversion, he had held dear. He was not a man to give his faith to such a doctrine without overwhelming evidence of its truth. As Saul of Tarsus he had been in the fullest confidence of the Jewish rulers, and knew all that they could urge against the reality of the Resurrection, but their arguments had no weight with one who had seen the risen Lord on the way to Damascus.

The importance of the Resurrection of Christ as an argument for the Divine origin of Christianity is recognised alike by those who receive and by those who reject it. Negative criticism has assailed the doctrine and has devised ingenious theories to explain on natural grounds the testimony on which it is received. The diversity of such explanations goes far to refute them, and their utter failure to account for the marvellous effects which the appearances of the risen Jesus produced on the witnesses, or for the place which the doctrine held in their teaching, has tended rather to establish than to discredit the reality of the Resurrection.

Various sceptical theories, to which much importance was attached for a time, are now almost forgotten. The Mythical theory fails to account for the immediate effect produced by belief in the Resurrection. Myths require time for their growth and development, but the disciples of Jesus set the Resurrection in the forefront from the

[1] Acts i. 22. [2] Rom. x. 9.

very first On the day of Pentecost Peter sounded the keynote of Apostolic preaching when he declared, "This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses." And so from this time forward, "with great power gave the Apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus." The historical fact not only rests upon the most irresistible evidence; it is the very corner-stone of the whole fabric of Gospel teaching.

Another view of the testimony for the Resurrection has found advocates who claim that it explains, without having recourse to supernaturalism, the belief of the disciples and others in the doctrine. With some minor differences of detail, they agree in attributing the persistency of those who said that they had seen Jesus alive, to the impression produced on them by His wonderful personality. This, they hold, was so strong that the effect continued after His death, and the disciples saw visions of Him so vivid that they believed them to be real appearances. He had filled so much of their lives while He was with them, that they were unable to realise His departure, and retained His image in their hearts continually. Exalted and excited feeling projected His figure so that they saw Him apparently restored to life.

A theory such as this will not stand, in the face of the evidence for the Resurrection. It was no subjective impression, but the Saviour Himself, that brought conviction to the minds of the numerous witnesses. It was no apparition, it was a body that they saw and handled and tested and proved to be of flesh and blood. They heard their Master speak, and saw Him eat; and at frequent intervals for forty days He showed Himself to them. Sometimes He was seen by one, sometimes by many; and before His ascension He charged them to carry on the work He had committed to them: to feed His sheep, to feed His lambs, to go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature. "Him," said Peter, "God raised up on the third day, and showed him openly; not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of

God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead."[1]

What they saw was the true body of their Lord, the same that had been crucified, dead, and buried, but a marvellous change had passed over it. It was now possessed of spiritual qualities, suddenly appearing, suddenly vanishing; now felt to be made of flesh and bones, and now passing through closed doors, or walking upon water. It was no longer subject to natural law as it had been before the Resurrection; and when the disciples beheld the Lord, they had not only proof of His continued existence, of His being God as well as man, and of God's seal having been set upon His atoning work,—they had also an intimation of what life hereafter will be for His followers, who shall be like Him, for they shall see Him as He is.

How full and widespread was the belief in the Resurrection of Jesus in the hearts of those who were its witnesses, is apparent not only from the fact that the great theme of their preaching was "Jesus and the resurrection," but is also evident from the importance they attached to the Lord's Day and the Lord's Supper. These institutions have a direct connection with the Resurrection, the former having been substituted for the Jewish Sabbath expressly on the ground that on that day the Lord rose; the latter, while it commemorates His death, sets forth also His resurrection life.

[1] Acts x. 40, 41.

ARTICLE VI

He ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty

FORTY days after His resurrection Jesus charged the Apostles, in the last words He is known to have spoken on earth, to testify of Him throughout the world, and assured them that they should receive power through the descent of the Holy Spirit. This last-recorded utterance called His Church to missionary enterprise: "Ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."[1] It is when believers in Christ are faithful in the performance of this duty that fulfilment of the promise may be confidently looked for, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."[2]

We are told that, when Jesus had spoken these things, "He led them out as far as to Bethany, and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them. And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven."[3]

Ascension is the completion of Resurrection. "If he were on earth," says the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, "he should not be a priest."[4] No part of His work would have corresponded to that of the high priest, who, when he had offered up sacrifice, passed into the holy place with the blood of the victim, and laid it upon the altar. The act thus foreshadowed in the type was accomplished when our great High Priest

[1] Acts i. 8.
[2] Matt. xxviii. 20.
[3] Luke xxiv. 50, 51.
[4] Heb. viii. 4.

passed into the heavens, and "entered not into the holy places made with hands, which are the figure of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us."[1]

The Ascension took place in open day and in the sight of the Apostles. "While they beheld, he was taken up."[2] That they might be witnesses of the fact, it was necessary that they should see Him go up from earth. Unlike the Ascension, the Resurrection of Christ took place unseen by mortal eye. Eye-witnesses of His rising from the dead were not needed. The fact that they had seen Jesus after He rose qualified them to be witnesses of His Resurrection, but it was only because they had seen Him taken up that they could bear personal testimony to His Ascension.

Thus our Lord "ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty." This Article expresses the honour and dignity of His Person and character. To sit on the right hand is an honour reserved for the most favoured.[3] When the Scriptures speak of the right hand of God, it is meant that, as the right hand among men is the place of honour, power, and happiness, so to sit on the right hand of God is to obtain the place of highest glory, power, and satisfaction.

At God's right hand our Lord entered into everlasting and perfect glory and dominion. Being one with the Father, all that is the Father's is His. He is exalted a Prince and a Saviour, having an eternal life and all the fulness of the Godhead dwelling in Him bodily. The Father Himself gave Him the place at His right hand, having highly exalted Him and given Him a name which is above every name. None can dethrone Him or successfully plot against His kingdom. No weapon, carnal or spiritual, can ever prevail against Him. It is this that gives to Christianity its stability and power, for Christianity is Christ Himself sitting at the right hand of God. The ascended Christ exercises absolute authority and

[1] Heb. ix. 24. [2] Acts i. 9.
[3] 1 Kings ii. 19; Psalm xvi. 11; Heb. ix. 24.

unlimited dominion. The Father on whose right hand the Son sits is, in this clause, as in that which stands at the beginning of the Creed, termed the "Father Almighty." Though the distinction is not apparent in the English version of the Creed, "Almighty" in the original Greek is in these clauses expressed by two different words. In the earlier clause, the word so rendered signifies God's supreme, universal dominion, while here the word employed denotes the fact that His power and operation are always efficacious and irresistible, and that all things are under His absolute control. This word "Almighty" warrants the belief which the clause declares, that the Son, sitting on the right hand of the Father, possesses absolute and universal power, and that in executing His office as Mediator none can resist or oppose Him.

The word "sitteth" is expressive not so much of the attitude as of the settled and continuous character of Christ's exaltation. At God's right hand in heaven He executes the offices of Prophet, Priest, and King, as He did on earth. The prophet, as teacher of the revealed truth, held office in Old Testament times; and when Jesus entered on His public ministry, it was as a Divinely-accredited teacher that He claimed to be received. He brought out of His treasury things new and old, and exhorted men to hear, believe, and obey Him. By His words and His life, He made known the will of God for man's salvation; and when He was lifted up upon the cross, it was to the end that, by the sacrifice He offered and the truth He taught, He might draw all men unto Him. He brought life and immortality to light, and since His departure He has not ceased to be the Teacher and the Guide of all who receive Him. His word abides with us, and His first gift to the Church after He rose was the Holy Ghost, who came to lead men to all truth. When the Lord ascended on high He received gifts for men, "and he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the

ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ."[1] It is in Him that all Christian teaching originates, and through His Spirit that it takes hold of men's hearts. Our Lord does not indeed now appear in visible form, speaking face to face with men as He did in Palestine, but He speaks in and through every believer who in His name seeks to win souls for His Kingdom. Paul recognised this when he wrote to the Corinthians, "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God."[2]

In His exaltation, Christ executes the office of a Priest. The functions of the Jewish high priest were not limited to the offering of sacrifice. When he had made an end of offering, he carried the blood of the victim into the Holy Place and made intercession for the sins of the congregation. As the mediator between God and His people, he thus foreshadowed the work of Him who is a "priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek,"—succeeding none, and being succeeded by none, in His priestly office. As the high priest's work was partly without and partly within the Holy Place, so Christ's priestly work is twofold, consisting of His satisfaction for sin upon earth and His intercession in heaven. "Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us." He was once offered to bear the sins of many, thereby satisfying Divine justice and reconciling men to God. After having as our great High Priest offered the sacrifice of Himself, He passed into the heavens. There He makes continual intercession for us.

At the right hand of God He exercises kingly prerogatives also. He was anointed to the royal office at His baptism, when the Holy Ghost descended on Him.[3] When by death He overcame him who had the power of death; when He rose from the grave and announced to His disciples that all power was given Him in heaven and earth, He asserted His kingly office; and when God, having raised Him from the dead, set Him at His own

[1] Ephes. iv. 11, 12. [2] 2 Cor. v. 20.
[3] Matt. iii. 16; Acts x. 38.

right hand in heavenly places, far above all principalities, and powers, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come, all things were put under His feet, He was given to be Head over all things to the church,[1] and received dominion and glory and a kingdom. He must reign until all His enemies are under His feet. "To which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool?"[2]

[1] Ephes. i. 22. [2] Heb. i. 13.

ARTICLE VII

From thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead

THIS clause of the Creed points to the future. As those who saw Jesus ascend stood gazing up, two heavenly messengers in white apparel appeared and said to them, "This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven."[1] Jesus Himself often warned the disciples that the time was at hand when He should leave them and return to His Father, but that His departure was not to be final, for He would come again to gather all nations before Him, and to judge the quick and the dead. He comforted them by the statement that His going away was expedient for them. "I go to prepare a place for you." "I will come again, and receive you unto myself."[2] But the return was not to be only for the reception of the faithful into His kingdom and glory, but for judgment upon all mankind. "The Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then shall he reward every man according to his works."[3] "Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him."[4]

The time of Christ's return to judgment has not been revealed. "Of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only."[5] The first Christians looked for it with joyous expectation,

[1] Acts i. 11. [2] John xiv. 2, 3. [3] Matt. xvi. 27. [4] Rev. i. 7. [5] Matt. xxiv. 36.

believing that their Lord and Master would speedily appear and redress their wrongs. Cruelly persecuted by Jew and Gentile, it is no wonder that Apostles and other believers associated the second advent with emancipation and victory, and termed it "That blessed hope, the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ."[1] Under the influence of false teachers, this expectation gave rise to unhealthy excitement and consequent disorder in the Church. In his second Epistle to the Thessalonians Paul set himself earnestly to counteract their teaching. He indignantly repudiated the doctrine attributed to him, apparently in connection with a forged epistle, and he supplied a test by which the genuineness of his letters might be proved.

The mistake of the Thessalonians has often been repeated. Attempts have been made to fix the time of the Lord's second coming, and the work of predicting goes on busily still. Enthusiasts and impostors have been more or less successful in finding credulous followers. Again and again the progress of time has falsified such predictions, but would-be prophets have not been discouraged by the blunders of their predecessors.

All men, quick and dead, are to be brought before the Judgment-seat, the faithful that they may be raised to everlasting blessedness, and the wicked to be dismissed to everlasting punishment. Paul describes the events of the great day of Christ's appearing as it will affect the saints. "The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air."[2] He gives a similar description to the Corinthians: "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed."[3] "He commanded us to testify," says Peter,

[1] Titus ii. 13. [2] 1 Thess. iv. 16, 17. [3] 1 Cor. xv. 51, 52.

"that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead."[1] And Paul writes to Timothy that "the Lord Jesus Christ shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing."[2]

The most awful descriptions of the Judgment, as it will affect the wicked, are given by the Lord Jesus Himself. In Matthew xxv. we have a series of images, in which the terrors of the "great day of the Lord" are set forth. The virgins that go out to meet the Bridegroom, the servants with their talents, the Judge dividing all brought before Him as a shepherd divideth the sheep from the goats, are warnings of the certainty and severity of judgment, and of the doom reserved for the ungodly.

"The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son."[3] As God, He has all things naked and open before Him. As man, He became subject to human conditions, and was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Our Judge knows our frame, our temptations, our weakness, our difficulties; and in the Judgment, as in His life on earth, He will not break the bruised reed, or apply to men's conduct a harsher measure than they have merited. Judgment will begin at the house of God, and sentence on the ungodly will be severe in proportion to knowledge, privilege, and opportunity. Men will be judged by their works, and in this doctrine of Scripture there is no opposition to that of justification by faith. Men cannot be justified by their own works, but if Christ be in them and the Spirit of God dwell in their hearts, then, being dead to sin, they follow holiness. The distinction between the children of God and the children of the devil is this, that the former class bring forth the fruits of righteousness, and the latter the fruits of sin. "A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things."[4] In the Judgment the works of every man shall be brought to light,

[1] Acts x. 42. [2] 2 Tim. iv. 1 [3] John v. 22. [4] Matt. xii. 35.

whether they be good or evil. "There is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; and hid, that shall not be known."[1] The just shall be rewarded, not on account of their good works, but because of the atonement and righteousness of Christ; yet their works will be the test of their sanctification and the proof that they are members of Christ and regenerated by His Spirit.

[1] Matt. x. 26.

ARTICLE VIII

I believe in the Holy Ghost

THE eighth article of the Creed declares belief in the third Divine Person—the Holy Ghost.

The words "I believe," implied in every clause, are here repeated, to mark the transition from the Second to the Third Person of the Trinity.

While this doctrine underlies all the teaching of the Old Testament Scriptures, it was yet in a measure not understood or realised by the Jews, and as Christ came to make known the Father, so to Him we owe also the full revelation of the Holy Spirit. Prophets and Psalmists had glimpses of the doctrine, but they lived in the twilight, and saw through a glass darkly many truths now clearly made known.

While we speak freely of spiritual life, our conception of it is so vague that we are apt to overlook, or to regard lightly, the work of the Holy Spirit in redemption. The disciples of John, whom Paul met at Ephesus, believed in Jesus and had been baptized, and yet they told the Apostle that they had not so much as heard whether there was any Holy Ghost.[1] John tells us that even while Jesus was on earth the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified.[2]

That the Holy Ghost is a Person, and not, as some hold, a mere energy or influence proceeding from the Father, or from the Father and the Son, is apparent from the passages of Scripture which refer to Him. An energy has no existence independent of the agent, but this can

[1] Acts xix. 2. [2] John vii. 39.

not be maintained with reference to the Holy Ghost. He is associated as a Person with Persons. In the baptismal formula and in the apostolic benediction the Holy Spirit is spoken of in the same terms as the Father and the Son, and is therefore a Person as they are Persons. He is said to possess will and understanding. He is said to teach, to testify, to intercede, to search all things, to bestow and distribute spiritual gifts according to His will.

The Holy Ghost addresses the Father, and is therefore not the Father. He intercedes with the Father, and so is not a mere energy of the Father. Jesus promised to send the Spirit from the Father, but the Father could not be sent from or by Himself. It is said that the Spirit when He came would not speak of Himself—a statement that cannot apply to the Father; and while Christ promised to send the Spirit, He did not promise to send the Father.

The Holy Ghost is not the Son, for the Son says He will send Him. He is "another Comforter," who speaks and acts as a person. The Holy Ghost said, "Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them."[1]

The arguments for the distinct personality of the Holy Ghost prove also that He is God. The baptismal formula and the apostolic benediction assume His Divinity. The words of Christ with reference to the sin against the Holy Ghost imply that He is God, and Peter affirms this doctrine when, having accused Ananias of lying to the Holy Ghost, he adds, "Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God."[2] Paul also asserts it when, in arguing against sins of the flesh, he affirms that the body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, and also declares of it that the temple of GOD is holy. Divine properties are ascribed to the Holy Spirit. Thus *Omnipotence* is attributed to Him—"The Spirit shall quicken your mortal bodies";[3] *Omniscience*—"The Spirit searcheth all things";[4] *Omnipresence*—"Whither shall I go from

[1] Acts xiii. 2. [2] Acts v. 4. [3] Rom. viii. 11. [4] 1 Cor. ii. 10.

thy Spirit?"[1] Divinity is attributed to the third Person in the statement that "holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost,"[2] taken in connection with the other statement, "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God."[3]

Jesus was conceived by the Holy Ghost, and, because of this, though born of a woman, He was in His human nature the Son of God. "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee . . . therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God."[4] Each of the three Persons has part in the work of redemption. The Father gave the Son, and accepted Him as man's Sinbearer and Sacrifice; the Son gave Himself, and assumed human nature that He might suffer and die in the room and stead of sinners; and the Holy Ghost applies to men the work of redeeming love, taking of the things of Christ and making them known,[5] till they produce repentance, faith, and salvation. The Father's gift of the Son and the Son's sacrifice of Himself are of the past; the work of the Holy Spirit has gone on day by day, ever since the risen and glorified Redeemer sent Him to make His people ready for the place which He is preparing for them. It is through Him that we understand the Scriptures, and receive power to fear God and keep His commandments. He comes to human hearts, and when He enters He banishes discord and bestows happiness and peace. Then with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and the fruits of the Spirit are manifested in his life. The love of the Father and the redemption secured by the Son's Incarnation and Passion fail to affect us if we have not our share in the Spirit's sanctification. There is a sense in which the Holy Ghost comes nearer to us, if we may so speak, than the other Persons of the Godhead. If we are true believers, the Holy Ghost is enthroned in our hearts. "He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you."[6] Our bodies become the temples of the Holy Ghost.[7] It is

[1] Ps. cxxxix. 7. [2] 2 Peter i. 21. [3] 2 Tim. iii. 16. [4] Luke i. 35.
[5] John xvi. 15. [6] John xiv. 17. [7] 1 Cor. vi. 19.

through Him that the Father and the Son come and make their abode in the faithful.[1] We are made "an habitation of God through the Spirit."[2] "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."[3] When we consider the work He carries on in convicting men of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment, and in converting, guiding, and comforting those whom He influences, we can understand that it was expedient for us that Christ should go away, in order that the Comforter might come.[4] If we are receiving and resting on Jesus as our Saviour, then His Spirit is within us as the earnest of our inheritance.[5] His presence imparts power such as no spiritual enemy can resist. How different were the Apostles before and after they had received the gift of the Spirit! One of them who, before, denied Christ when challenged by a maid, afterwards proclaimed boldly in the presence of the hostile Jewish council, "We ought to obey God rather than men."[6] Those who, when He was apprehended, had forsaken Him and fled, gathered courage to brave kings and rulers as they preached salvation through Him. The disciples, who, in accordance with Christ's injunction, awaited the descent of the Spirit, were on the day of Pentecost clothed with power before which bigotry and selfishness passed into faith and charity and self-surrender; and there was won on that day for the Church a triumph such as the might of God alone could have secured—a triumph which the ministry of the Spirit, whenever it is recognised and accepted, is always powerful to repeat and to surpass.

All good comes to man through the Spirit. Every inspiration of every individual is from Him, the Lord and Giver of light, and life, and understanding. Every good thought that rises within us, every unselfish motive that stimulates us, every desire to be holy, every resolve to do what is right, what is brave, or noble, or self-sacrificing, comes to man from the Holy Ghost. He is instructing and directing us not only on special occasions, as when we

[1] John xiv. 23. [2] Ephes. ii. 22. [3] Rom. viii. 9.
[4] John xxi. 7. [5] Ephes. i. 14. [6] Acts v. 29.

read the Bible or meet for worship, but always, if we will listen for His voice. His personal indwelling in man, as Counsellor and Guide, is the fulfilment of the promise—"I will dwell in them, and walk in them." "He will guide you into all truth" is an assurance of counsel and victory that is ever receiving fulfilment, and that cannot be broken.[1]

[1] 2 Cor. vi. 16; John xvi. 13.

THIS BOOK BELONGS TO
T. VERNON BIBLE COLLEGE

ARTICLE IX

The Holy Catholic Church, the Communion of Saints

Section 1.—The Holy Catholic Church

IN the clause of the Creed which expresses belief in Jesus Christ, He is called our Lord. "And in Jesus Christ our Lord." That He is their Lord is declared by believers, when they term the society of which they are members "the Church." This word is derived from the Greek *kurios*, Lord, in the adjectival form *kuriakos*, of or belonging to the Lord—the Scottish word "kirk" being therefore a form nearer the original than the equivalent term *Church*. The Greek word translated "church" occurs only three times in the Gospels. In English the word is used in different senses, all of them, however, pointing to the Lord Jesus as their source and sanction. By "church," we sometimes mean a building set apart for Christian worship. The Jew had his Tabernacle in the Wilderness, his Temple at Jerusalem, and his Synagogue in the Provinces; the Mohammedan has his Mosque, and the Brahmin his Pagoda; but the Christian has his Church, in whose very name his Lord is honoured. Sometimes the word denotes the Christians of a specified city or locality—the Church at Ephesus, the Church at Corinth. Sometimes it is limited to a number of Christians meeting for worship in a house, as in Romans xvi. 5 and in Philemon.[1] Sometimes "Church" denotes a particular denomination of Christians, as the Presbyterian Church, the Episcopal Church. Some-

[1] See *The New Testament and its Writers*, by Dr. M'Clymont (Guild Library), p. 123, note 1.

times it expresses the distinctive form which Christianity assumes in a particular nation—the Church of England, the Church of Scotland. In the Creed the Holy Catholic Church means the whole body of believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, all who anywhere and everywhere are looking to Him for salvation, and are bringing forth the fruits of holiness to His praise and glory.

The Lord Jesus Christ did not, during His ministry, set up a Church as an outward organisation. He was Himself to be the Church's foundation; but in order to be qualified for this office it was necessary that He should first lay down His life. The work of building and extending, in so far as it was to be effected by human agency, must be undertaken by others after His departure. He came to fulfil the law, and so He was not sent save to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. He worshipped, accordingly, in the Jewish temple and synagogues, observed the sacraments and festivals of the Old Testament Church, and during His earthly ministry bade His disciples observe and do whatsoever the men who sat in Moses' seat commanded. "The faithful saying, worthy of all acceptation," with which the Christian Church was to be charged as God's message to the world, was not yet published, for Christ had still to suffer and enter into His glory, and the Holy Ghost had yet to be sent by the Father before the standard of the Church could be set up. While the Church rests on Christ, it is founded upon His Apostles also, to whom He committed the work for which He had prepared them, and for which He was still further to qualify them by bestowing power from on high. The gifts which He received for men when He ascended were needed to equip them for the work of founding that Church, which became a possibility only through His death and resurrection. Applying to them the redemption purchased by Christ, the Holy Ghost wrought in and with them, and crowned their labours with success. The Christian Church was set up on the day of Pentecost, when the Holy Ghost came down upon a

band of believers assembled at Jerusalem waiting for the promise of the Father. Under His inspiration Peter preached the first Christian sermon with such power that the same day there were added unto the Church three thousand souls.

The Church is termed the *Holy* Catholic Church. When the epithet "holy" is applied to the Church, it is not meant that all who profess faith in Jesus Christ and are in connection with the visible Church, are holy, or that any of them are altogether holy. Our Lord taught that while in the world His Church would contain a mixture of good and bad. He likened it to a net in which good and bad fishes are caught, and to a field in which wheat and tares grow together. Though all are called to be saints, "there is not a just man upon earth that doeth good, and sinneth not."[1] The sanctification of believers is the work of the Holy Spirit, effected not by a momentary act but by degrees, and never perfected in this life.

Upon all who truly receive the Lord Jesus a change is wrought by the Holy Spirit of God, which results in holiness. Looking unto Jesus, they behold as in a glass the glory of the Lord, and are changed into the same image. The transformation which they undergo extends to every part of their being. The subject of sanctification is the whole man. The understanding, will, conscience, memory, affections are all renewed in their operations, and the members of the body become instruments of righteousness unto holiness. As believers are enabled to die unto sin, they live unto righteousness. Being renewed in the inner man by the Divine Spirit, they bring forth the fruits of the Spirit. Their desire is after holiness, for they know that the restoration of holiness is the end for which Jesus died and for which the Spirit works. "Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle,

[1] Eccles. vii. 20.

or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."[1] Now, the Church is marred by many blemishes, but her imperfection is for a time only. When her period of work and probation is accomplished she will be purged and perfected, and will be a church without spot or wrinkle. Meantime she is the Holy Church because her Head is holy, and because she is called out of the world and consecrated to the service of God. She is holy because she is the body of Christ, of whose fulness she receives, and whose graces she reflects, and because it is through her teaching, prayers, and institutions that the Holy Spirit usually works and influences men to follow holiness. The ministry, the preaching, the sacraments, the laws, and the discipline of the Church have as their end the turning of men from their sins and persuading them to follow holiness.

The Christian Church is a *Catholic* Church. The word "Catholic" means universal, and implies that, unlike the Jewish Church, which was narrow and local, requiring admission to earthly citizenship as the condition of receiving spiritual privilege, the Church of Christ is coextensive with humanity, and accessible to all. The Master's charge was that the Gospel should be preached to every creature. The Church's field is the world, and her commission sets before her as a duty that she shall go into all the world bearing the glad tidings of salvation. The disciples did not at first realise this comprehensiveness of the new faith. Even after his address on the day of Pentecost, Peter had not risen above his Jewish prejudices. It was not until after he beheld in vision the great sheet let down from heaven, and was forbidden to regard anything which God had cleansed as common or unclean, that the fulness of the Gospel dispensation was understood by him, and he discovered to his astonishment that God is no respecter of persons, but that in every nation he that feareth Him and worketh righteousness is acceptable to Him.[2]

The Catholic Church is *One*. It is *the* Holy Catholic Church, one in its origin as the household of God.

[1] Ephes. v. 25-27. [2] Acts x. 34, 35 (R.V.).

built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ being the chief corner-stone;[1] one body, with one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism.[2] The distinctive marks of the true Church are allegiance to one Lord, confession of a common creed, and participation in the same Sacraments.

The unity of the Catholic Church is quite compatible with the existence of separate organisations that differ in regard to details of government or worship. There is no outward organisation which possesses a monopoly of Christian truth and privilege. While all who "hold the Head" stand fast in one spirit, they are not all enrolled as members of one ecclesiastical body, or subject to the authority of one earthly ruler. Their citizenship is in heaven; not in Rome or in any city of this world. The claim asserted by the Bishops of Rome to be infallible representatives of Christ and exclusive possessors of the keys of the kingdom of heaven, to whom all men owe allegiance, and whose decrees and discipline cannot be questioned without sin, has no support in Scripture, which, while it enjoins unity of spirit, never prescribes uniformity of organisation.

What the Romanist claims for the Pope is virtually claimed for the Church by some who reject Papal authority. By the Church they mean one visible body of Christians under the same ecclesiastical constitution and government, and they maintain that the right to expound with authority the will of God is vested in this body, and that private judgment must be subordinated to its decisions. To constitute the Church they say there must be bishops at its head, ordained by men whose ecclesiastical orders have come down from apostolic times in unbroken succession. Without this apostolical succession, it is affirmed, there can be no Church, no true ordination, no valid or effectual administration of sacraments.

Such a definition of the Catholic Church excludes from participation in the ordinary means of grace the whole body of Presbyterians, nearly all the Protestant

[1] Ephes. ii. 20. [2] Ephes. iv. 4-6.

Churches of Europe, and all who refuse to admit direct transmission of orders from the Apostles as a primary condition of the Church's existence. Carried to its logical conclusion, it would exclude even those who maintain it; for all attempts to trace back a continuous and complete series of ordinations from modern times to the apostolic age fail to show an unbroken line. It is therefore not possible for any bishop or minister in Christendom to be certain that, in this sense, he is a successor of the Apostles. The Catholic Church is not exclusively Episcopalian or Presbyterian or Congregational. It is found in all Christian communities, and maintains its identity in all. It is said by Paul to be made up of "them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ in every place, their Lord and ours."[1] As it is not the Pope that admits to, or excludes from, heaven, so it is not the prerogative of any church to bestow or to withhold salvation. The right of private judgment, asserted and secured by the Scottish Reformers, is one which we are not only entitled but bound to exercise. We must search the Scriptures for ourselves, that in their light we may prove all things and hold fast that which is good. A famous saying of Ignatius, who first applied the term "Catholic" to the Church, supplies the true description of a living church—"Wherever Jesus Christ is, there is the Catholic Church."[2]

Section 2.—The Communion of Saints

This article appears to have first found place in the Creed as a protest against the tenets of a sect called the Donatists, from Donatus their leader. He seceded (314 A.D.) from the Christian Church in North Africa, carrying with him numerous followers, and set up a new church organisation, claiming for it place and authority as the only Church of Christ. Circumstances put powers of excommunication and persecution at his disposal,

[1] 1 Cor. i. 2 (R.V.). [2] *Epistle to Smyrna*, c. 8.

which he directed against those who refused to become his followers.

Augustine was for a time a Donatist, but his truth-loving spirit soon discovered the real character of Donatus, and then he became his active and uncompromising opponent. It was probably as a protest against the arrogance of the Donatists, and in deference to Augustine's wish, that the clause was inserted. In this profession it is declared that the Holy Catholic Church is one not in virtue of outward forms, or even through perfect agreement among its members upon all details of doctrine, but because of the holiness of those who compose it. It refuses to excommunicate any who hold fast the form of sound words, and who adhere to one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all. It is a brotherhood of which all who have the spirit of Christ are members. Differences in colour, or country, or rank do not suffice to separate those who are "the body of Christ and members in particular." The spirit of Christian fellowship that marks the saints finds fitting expression in the noble words of Augustine, "In things essential, unity; in things doubtful, liberty; in all things, charity."

The primary meaning of the word "saint" is a person consecrated or set apart. In this sense all baptized persons who are professing members of the Church of Christ are saints. In the New Testament the whole body of professing Christians resident in a city or district are called saints, although some among them may have been unworthy; just as in the Old Testament the prophets even in degenerate times termed the people of Israel an "holy nation," that is, a nation separated from the rest of the world and consecrated to God's service. Thus we read that Peter visited the saints which dwelt at Lydda.[1] Paul speaks of a collection for the poor saints at Jerusalem, and writes letters to all the saints in Achaia,[2] to all the saints in Christ Jesus at Philippi, and to the saints at Ephesus; and Jude speaks of the faith once delivered to the saints. In these passages the title is

[1] Acts ix. 32. [2] 2 Cor. i. 1.

applied to all who were in outward fellowship with the Christian Church.

The term "saint" is used also in a more restricted sense. As they were not all Israel who were of Israel, and as not every one that saith "Lord, Lord" shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, so all who are enrolled as members of the Christian Church do not lead saintly lives, and those only are truly saints who are striving to live godly in Christ Jesus, and to be holy, even as He who hath called them is holy. This clause of the Creed expresses the doctrine that Christians ought to have fellowship one with another, and that there ought to be harmonious relations and stimulating communion between their several churches and congregations—such fellowship and communion as may lead the world to believe that they are one in Christ, and that, though compelled by circumstances to assemble in different places and to form separate societies, they are, nevertheless, all members of one body, of which Jesus Christ is the Head; all stones in one building, of which He is the chief Corner-stone; all branches in one true vine, of which He is the Stem; and all animated and directed by the same Spirit. Thus regarded, the clause is a protest against the exclusiveness which often marks Christian churches, and is a recognition of the spirit of charity.

The extent of this Communion of the Saints is not revealed. Much of it is spiritual, and is therefore invisible to us. God alone marks in full measure the fellowship of the churches, and is acquainted with the character and conduct of all their members. He knew the seven thousand in Israel who had never bowed the knee to Baal, and the real, though unrecognised, communion they had with one another in their common fidelity and prayer to Him; but Elijah did not know how much true fellowship he had, when he denounced the idolatries of Jezebel and pleaded with God for Israel. The ignorance of the prophet, who thought he was the only faithful Israelite, has its counterpart in our own times. God knows, but we do not know, how many faithful saints there are in the

world who are in fellowship with one another because they are in fellowship with Him. We are excluded by many barriers from the knowledge of our brethren and sisters in Christ Jesus. Natural and moral difficulties stand in the way, hindering this knowledge; differences in language, in environment, in habits and modes of thought, and other limitations, disable us for truly gauging the character of those with whom we are brought into close contact. Communion is nevertheless real and true. The members of the Church of the living God, however they may be scattered and divided, have communion and fellowship with the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and being in fellowship with God, they are of one mind, and are knit together by common faith and mutual sympathy. They are all one with the same Head, and they have all one hope of their calling.

Our Lord brought life and immortality to light, and taught men that between the Church militant and the Church triumphant there is indissoluble fellowship. Those who followed holiness in this life are saints still in the life to which they have passed. In the Epistle to the Hebrews, believers are told that they "are come to the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven . . . and to the spirits of just men made perfect."[1]

While the clause was probably inserted at first to vindicate the doctrine of communion of saints in this life, it has long been regarded as extending to a communion subsisting between the spirits of just men made perfect and followers of the Lord Jesus Christ who are still on earth. The passage last quoted justifies the inference that death does not suspend the fellowship which believers in Jesus Christ have with Him, their common Lord. Death separates the soul from the body, but it does not cut off the dead from communion with the Father or the Son. He who is the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob is the God not of the dead, but of the living. Of the whole family of the saints, some are in

[1] Heb. xii. 23.

heaven and some on earth, and, between those who are there and those who are here, there is communion. Since the heavenly Church received Abel as its first member, there has been unceasing fellowship between militant and glorified saints. Those who are here are shut out by the tabernacle of the body from personal intercourse with the souls of the departed, but are yet in a fellowship with them that is very real and precious. The holy dead act upon the living, and, it may be, are reacted upon in ways we do not understand. Of Abel we are told that "being dead, he yet speaketh."[1] Those whom death has taken do not cease to exert an influence on the lives of friends left behind. Their example, their good deeds, their writings, the undying consequences of what they did while on earth affect us. The veil which death interposes between us and them hinders us from witnessing their spirit life, and we know not whether, or in what measure, or how, they contemplate us. We do not go to them to ask them to intercede for us with the Father, for we believe there is but one Mediator between God and man. We do not invest them with attributes which belong to God alone; all that we are warranted to say about their relation to us is, that what is revealed does not forbid, but rather encourages, the thought that they are interested in us and concerned for our happiness. If the angels rejoice over the conversion of a sinner, are we to think that the spirits of just men made perfect are strangers to this joy? They are within the veil, we cannot see them, but we know they are in communion with God. The condition of the departed saints is one of waiting as well as of progress. They have not attained to fruition. There are doctrines which to them, as to us, are still matters not of experience but of faith and hope. The souls of the martyrs seen by John under the altar were in a state of expectation, desiring and pleading as when in the flesh they had desired and pleaded for the consummation of Messiah's kingdom; and from them

[1] Heb. xi. 4.

the Apostle heard the cry ascend, "How long, O Lord?"[1] Saints here and saints who have passed through the valley into the unseen must surely hold many beliefs in common. Both alike believe the promises of God, and anticipate the glorious consummation for which they wait and watch, when the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of the living God. They believe in the resurrection of the body and in its reunion with the soul for ever. They have common affections. Their love is given to the same God. They have community of worship, and have communion in thanksgiving, praise, and, may we not say, in prayer for the overthrow of the kingdom of darkness and the advent of the kingdom of glory? As those who are still in the body keep the New Testament feast, they feel that there is fellowship between them and saints departed, seeing that they honour the same Saviour, glory in the same cross, partake of the same heavenly food, and look for the same inheritance of perfect blessedness.

[1] Rev. vi. 10.

ARTICLE X

The Forgiveness of Sins

THE Creed acknowledges God as the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth; but there is another relation which He sustains to His creatures besides those of Creator and Father. In Scripture He is represented as the King, Ruler, Governor of the universe, who imposes laws upon all His creatures, and requires of them scrupulous obedience. With the exception of man, the visible creatures have these laws, from which they cannot swerve, within their constitutions. The planet never deviates from its appointed orbit; the insect, the bird, the beast all live in strict accordance with their instincts; but, unlike them, man possesses freedom of will and power of choice. This freedom, if rightly exercised, is a noble possession, but, perverted, it is an instrument of destruction. The lower animals cannot sin because the law of their lives is within them, constraining them to act in accordance with its dictates. Upon man, free to choose, God imposed law. With freedom of will he received the gift of conscience, which, enabling him to distinguish between right and wrong, invested him with responsibility, and made disobedience sin. That he can sin is his patent of nobility, that he does sin is his ruin and disgrace.

The effect of sin is separation from God, who can have no fellowship with evil, for sin is the abominable thing which He hates, and on which He cannot even look. A breach, altogether irreparable on man's part, was made between man and his Creator when

the first transgression of the law of God took place. The impulse of every sinner, which only Divine power can overcome, is to flee from God. Hence arises the necessity for reconciliation, and for the intervention of God to effect it. That the unity thus broken may be restored, expiation must be made by one possessing the nature of the being that had sinned, and yet, by His possession of the Divine nature, investing that expiation with illimitable worth, so that all sin may be covered, and every sinner find a way of escape from the power and the penal consequences of transgression. These conditions meet in the Lord Jesus Christ and in Him alone. That God might, without compromising His attributes, be enabled to bring man back into fellowship with Himself, He spared not His own Son, and the Son freely gave Himself to suffering and death for the world's redemption.

In the felt necessity of atonement, which has associated sacrifice with every religion devised by man, we have evidence of the universality of sin. All feel its crushing pressure, and fear the punishment which, conscience assures them, is deserved and inevitable. The heathen confesses it as he prostrates himself before the image of his god, or immolates himself or his fellow-man upon his altar; and the Christian feels and confesses it as, fleeing for refuge, he finds pardon and cleansing in the blood of Jesus Christ.

Sin is original or actual, the former inherited from our parents, the latter, personal transgression of the Divine law. Every man descending from Adam by ordinary generation is born with the taint of original sin. As the representative head of humanity, Adam transmitted to all his descendants the nature that his sin had polluted. The fountain of life was poisoned at its source, and when Adam begat children they were born in his likeness. "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men." "Death reigned . . . even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression." "By one man's disobedience many were made sinners."[1]

[1] Rom. v. 19.

Actual sin consists in breaking any law of God made known to us by Scripture, conscience, or reason. It assumes many forms. There are sins of thought, of word, of deed; sins of commission, or doing what God forbids; of omission, or leaving undone what God commands; sins to which we are tempted by the world, the flesh, or the devil; sins directly against God; sins that wrong our neighbours, and that ruin ourselves; sins of pride, covetousness, lust, gluttony, anger, envy, sloth. In many things we sin, and "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us."[1]

Man's sinfulness is set forth in Scripture by a great variety of figures. The word rendered "sin" means the missing of a mark or aim. Sin is sometimes described as ignorance, sometimes as defeat, sometimes as disobedience. The definition of the Shorter Catechism is clear and comprehensive. "Sin is any want of conformity unto, or transgression of, the law of God."[2] The taint of original sin, extending to man's whole nature, inclines him to act in opposition to the law of God, and every concession to his corrupt desire, in thought, word, or deed, is actual sin. Because of it he is not subject to the law of God, neither, indeed, can be.

Sin is always spoken of in Scripture as followed by punishment or by pardon. There is no middle way. Salvation for man must therefore involve deliverance from condemnation.

The word which expresses man's liability to punishment is "guilt," and only a religion which makes known how he may be set free from guilt will suit his necessities. We cannot set ourselves free from condemnation. "Man," says the Confession of Faith, "by his fall into a state of sin, hath wholly lost all ability of will to any spiritual good accompanying salvation; so, as a natural man, being altogether averse from that good, and dead in sin, is not able, by his own strength, to convert himself, or prepare himself thereunto."[3] Forgiveness of sin must

[1] 1 John i. 8. [2] Ques. 14. [3] Chap. ix.

come from God. There is nothing in nature or in human experience to warrant hope of pardon. Nature never forgives a trespass against her law. The opportunity that is lost does not return. The mistake by which a life is marred cannot be undone. The constitution shattered by intemperance cannot be restored, the birthright bartered for a mess of pottage is gone for ever, and no bitter tears or supplications have power to bring it back. Whether we repent of it or not, every sin we commit leaves its dark mark behind, and in this life at least the stain can never be effaced; and yet we believe in the forgiveness of sin through the grace of God.

The forgiveness of sin is a free gift purchased by "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world," who by His Cross and Passion obtained for men this unspeakable benefit, and commanded that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations.[1]

In order that the grace of God may bring salvation, it is required that there shall be (*a*) Repentance. In Scripture repentance is set forth as necessarily preceding pardon: "Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent."[2] "Peter said unto them, Repent."[3] "Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins."[4] Repentance begins in contrition. "Godly sorrow for sin worketh repentance to salvation."[5] (*b*) Before the good gift of God can be received, it is necessary that we confess our sin. It is when we confess our sins that we obtain forgiveness and cleansing. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."[6] To produce conviction and confession is the work of the Holy Ghost. He reveals to the sinner the sinfulness of his life, and so works in him repentance. (*c*) Another requirement is unfeigned faith. "He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that

[1] Luke xxiv. 47. Acts v. 31. [2] Matt. iv. 17. [3] Acts ii. 38. [5] 2 Cor. vii. 10. [6] 1 John i. 8.

diligently seek Him." "Without faith it is impossible to please him."[1] "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."[2] "Let him ask in faith, nothing doubting: for he that doubteth is like the surge of the sea driven by the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord."[3] (*d*) There must be also humble, earnest resolution to be obedient to the will of God. The forgiveness secured by the death of Jesus is more than mere deliverance from the penalty of sin or the acquittal of the sinner. It is the remission of sins, the putting away of the sin. With pardon there is a renewal of the inner man. Return to holiness is secured, and the lost image of God is restored to man, so that he dies to sin and lives unto holiness. Nothing less than this will satisfy the true penitent, who asks for more than pardon, whose cry is, "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me."[4] It is not sufficient to be set free from punishment, there must be the abiding desire to have the life conformed to the Divine will. "The grace of God that bringeth salvation" teaches and enables all who receive it "to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world."[5]

[1] Heb. xi. 6. [2] Rom. v. 1. [3] James i. 6, 7 (R.V.).
[4] Psalm li. 10. [5] Titus ii. 12.

ARTICLE XI

The Resurrection of the Body

ANIMISM—the doctrine of the continuous existence, after death, of the disembodied human spirit—has a place in the majority of religious systems; but belief in the resurrection of the body is almost peculiar to the Christian faith. In Old Testament times the hope of immortality for body and soul seldom found expression. Job seems to have had at least a glimpse of the doctrine, although his words in the original do not express it so strongly as those of the English version: "I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God."[1] In the Psalms there are various intimations that faithful servants of God looked for a future life in which the body as well as the spirit should find place. Isaiah prophesied, "Thy dead men shall live, my dead body shall arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead."[2] Daniel still more emphatically declares, "Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt."[3] The story in the second book of Maccabees of the seven martyr-brothers, who would not accept life from the tyrant on condition of denying their God, proves that they were strengthened to endure by the sure hope of "a better resurrection." One of them thus

[1] Job xix. 25. [2] Isaiah xxvi. 19. [3] Dan. xii. 2.

confessed his faith: "Thou like a fury takest us out of this present life, but the King of the world shall raise us up, who have died for His laws, unto everlasting life." Another of the brothers, about to have his tongue plucked out and his hands cut off, "holding forth his hands manfully, said courageously, These I had from heaven . . . and from Him I hope to receive them again." Their mother, who is thought to have been one of the saints that in the Epistle to the Hebrews are said to have been tortured, not accepting deliverance, encouraged her sons to be faithful unto death by telling them that God who had given them life at the first would restore it. "I am sure," she said, "that He will of His own mercy give you breath and life again as ye now regard not your own selves for His laws' sake."[1] The Pharisees in the days of our Lord held by the doctrine, which the Sadducees, who rejected belief in angels and spirits, denied. The belief expressed by Martha when she said of her brother Lazarus, "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day,"[2] was in all likelihood current in her time. It may have been to impress the truth of resurrection-life for the body that Enoch, before the flood, and Elijah, in later Old Testament times, were translated; but it is in the New Testament, in words spoken by the Lord Jesus, that resurrection is fully revealed. "Marvel not at this," said He to the Jews; "for the hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of man, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."[3] In reply to the Sadducees, who attempted to ridicule His statements regarding resurrection, He said, "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God";[4] and He put them to silence by showing that the truth of resurrection was implied in the name by which God revealed Himself to Israel, "I am

[1] 2 Maccabees, chap. vii.
[2] John xi. 24.
[3] John v. 28, 29.
[4] Matt. xxii. 29.

the God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob." He showed His power over the dead body, and furnished assurance of resurrection, by raising the dead. He thus restored the daughter of Jairus and the son of the widow of Nain, and raised Lazarus from the tomb four days after he had died. In His own resurrection we have the most signal pledge of our bodily immortality. When He arose triumphant from the grave and showed Himself alive by many infallible proofs, He manifested His power as the conqueror of death.

It is clearly taught in Scripture that there is to be a general resurrection of the righteous and the wicked. In addition to texts already quoted, we find John declaring, "I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God, . . . and the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them";[1] and Paul writes to the Thessalonians, "We that are alive, that are left unto the coming of the Lord, shall in no wise precede them that are fallen asleep . . . and the dead in Christ shall rise first."[2]

The resurrection is associated with the second coming of Christ. It is His voice that shall awake the dead, and the angels who will accompany Him are to gather them from the four winds of heaven to the judgment-seat of Christ, "that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad."[3]

In resurrection, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost take part. God the Father, who "both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by his own power":[4] God the Son: "As the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will":[5] God the Holy Ghost, who, as the Giver of life, by His special action will raise our bodies: "He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you."[6] The Lord Jesus Christ is the meritorious cause of

[1] Rev. xx. 12, 13. [2] 1 Thess. iv. 15, 17 (R.V.). [3] 2 Cor. v. 10.
[4] 1 Cor. vi. 14. [5] John v. 21. [6] Rom. viii. 11.

resurrection: "By man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."[1] His resurrection is the pledge and the pattern of ours. "If we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection."[2]

Christianity teaches that the body as well as the soul is redeemed by the Lord Jesus Christ, "the Saviour of the body."[3] We are called to glorify God in our bodies, which are temples of the Holy Ghost, and we must give account for the deeds done in and through the body, as well as for those sins which are rather of the mind and will than of the body. The body will be raised and will be judged. God will bring to light all hidden things—actions forgotten by ourselves, deeds of which the world knows nothing, as well as those which memory retains and the world knows of. Before that "great and notable day" our bodies as well as our souls must have been purged, else we shall never see God. The bodies of the unjust will rise; but theirs will be resurrection to shame and everlasting contempt.

It is fitting that reward or punishment should be the portion of the same souls and bodies that have been faithful or unfaithful. Christ rose in the same body as He had before His death, and so shall we. How this is to be accomplished we cannot tell, but with God all things are possible, and faith rests with confidence in His power and in His Word. "We wait for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of his glory."[4] While the body is the same as that in which the soul tabernacled, it will undergo transformation. Christ will renew the bodily as well as the spiritual nature of His people. Every part of their being will be transformed, and their bodies, like Christ's, will be spiritual bodies. We are to be sanctified wholly; our whole

[1] 1 Cor. xv. 21, 22. [2] Rom. vi. 5.
[3] Ephes. v. 23. [4] Phil. iii. 20 21 (R.V.).

spirit and soul and body preserved blameless unto His coming.[1] In this present life the body builds up a character which it will retain throughout eternity. Every act we do affects it, not for the time only, but for ever. The lost soul will assume the polluted body, and while it may shrink in horror from the union, will find no way of escape. "He that is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still."[2] "Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap,"[3] and the harvest will abide with him for ever.

[1] 1 Thess. v. 23. [2] Rev. xxii. 11. [3] Gal. vi. 7.

ARTICLE XII

And the Life Everlasting

THE great truth affirmed in the concluding article of the Creed is the Life Everlasting: "The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life."[1] This life will be the portion of all who are acquitted in the day of judgment, and they will then enter upon new experiences. Death and hell shall be cast into the lake of fire, and the redeemed, no longer subject to imperfection, decay, or death, shall be raised to the right hand of the Father, where there is fulness of joy; to partake of those pleasures for evermore which have been purchased for them by the blood of the Lamb.

It is interesting to note the gradual development of this doctrine, which was first fully expressed by Him who brought life and immortality to light. We have the statement of the writer to the Hebrews that the faith of Old Testament saints had in view the continuance of life after death in "a better country, that is, an heavenly." Whether this faith grasped the doctrine of bodily resurrection, in addition to that of the immortality of the soul, we are not told. It is remarkable that throughout the books of Moses there is an absence of reference to the future life as a motive to holy living. Prosperity and adversity in this life are set forth as the reward or punishment of conduct, leading to the inference, either that retribution in the future life was not revealed, or that it exercised little practical influence. As time passed the doctrine of everlasting life for body and soul emerged in the Psalms and in the prophetical writings,

[1] Rom. vi. 23.

but sometimes side by side with such gloomy views regarding death and its consequences as to leave the impression that belief in it was weak and fitful. In the long period that passed between the time when Old Testament prophecy ceased and the advent of Christ, the fierce persecutions to which the Jews were subjected appear to have strengthened their faith in a future life of blessedness, in which the body, delivered from the grave and again united to the soul, shall participate.

The author of the Apocryphal Book termed *The Wisdom of Solomon* thus records his belief:—

The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God,
And no torment shall touch them.
In the eyes of the foolish they seemed to have died;
And their departure was accounted *to be their* hurt,
And their journeying away from us *to be their* ruin,
But they are in peace.
For even if in the sight of men they be punished,
Their hope is full of immortality:
And having borne a little chastening they shall receive great good;
Because God made trial of them, and found them worthy of Himself.
As gold in the furnace He proved them,
And as a whole burnt offering He accepted them.
And in the time of their visitation they shall shine forth,
And as sparks among stubble they shall run to and fro.
They shall judge nations, and have dominion over peoples;
And the Lord shall reign over them for evermore.
They that trust in Him shall understand truth,
And the faithful shall abide with Him in love;
Because grace and mercy are to His chosen.[1]

Again he writes:—

The righteous live for ever,
And in the Lord is their reward,
And the care for them with the Most High.
Therefore shall they receive the crown of royal dignity
And the diadem of beauty from the Lord's hand.[2]

[1] Wisdom, chap. iii. 1-9 (R.V.). [2] Chap. v. 15, 16 (R.V.).

The happiness of the kingdom of heaven is in Scripture termed "life," because it constitutes the life for which man was created. Being made in the likeness of God, his nature can obtain full satisfaction, and his powers will expand into fruition, only when he enters upon a life which resembles, in proportion to its measure and capacity, the life of God. Jesus spoke of regeneration as entering into life. Those who receive the Gospel message and walk in the footsteps of Christ are said to be born again—to receive in their conversion the beginning of a new existence, of which the entrance of the infant into the world is a fitting emblem. They possess now not only a natural life, but a life hid with Christ in God, which is a pledge to them that "when he who is their life shall appear, they also shall appear with him in glory."[1] Knowledge of God the Father and of Jesus Christ, imparted by the Holy Spirit, is said by our Lord to be Life Eternal. "This is life eternal, to know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent."[2]

Standing at the end of the Creed, this article expresses the consummation of the work accomplished for man by the Three Persons of the Godhead. The Father created man and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, that he might glorify God and enjoy Him for ever; and when, through the fall, man had forfeited the gift of life, God spared not His own Son, that, through His dying, pardon and blessed life might be brought within the reach of the fallen; the Son assumed human nature and suffered and died, that He might deliver men from death, temporal and eternal, and procure for them everlasting life; the Holy Ghost, the Giver of life, sanctifies the believer and makes him meet for the inheritance of the saints. All the means of grace were given for the purpose of convincing and converting men, and of preparing them for entrance into and enjoyment of the blessed life in eternity.

The *Everlasting Life* of the Creed covers more than

[1] Col. iii. 4. [2] John xvii. 3.

the immortality of the soul. Even heathens grasped in some measure the fact that the spirit of man survives separation from the body; but life for the body in reunion with the soul is a doctrine of revelation. In the Pagan world various conflicting beliefs were held as to the condition of men after death. Some thought that existence terminated at death; others that men then lost their personality and were absorbed into the deity; and others that the spirit was released by death and then entered on a separate existence, possessed of personality and capable of enjoyment; but of the Christian doctrine of resurrection-life for soul and body in abiding reunion they were altogether ignorant. Those consolations which Christianity brings to the mourner were unknown. There is an interesting letter extant which was written to Cicero, the Roman orator, by a friend who sought to comfort him after the death of his daughter Julia, in which the consolation tendered strikingly marks the distinction between Pagan and Christian views regarding death. Cicero was reminded by his friend that even solid and substantial cities, such as those whose ruined remains were to be seen in Asia Minor, were doomed to decay and destruction; and if so, it could not be thought that man's frail body can escape a similar experience. This is poor comfort in comparison with the hope of glory which sustains the Christian under trial. He knows not only that his soul shall live for ever, but that the life of eternity is one in which the body too, then incapable of pain, weariness, or death, shall have part. "We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."[1]

Everlasting existence after resurrection will be the portion of the righteous and the wicked. Attempts have been made to explain away various emphatic Scripture statements regarding the doom of the ungodly, with the view of lessening its terrors; but, if we are to accept the plain meaning of these statements, there seems to be no

[1] 2 Cor. v. 1.

reasonable interpretation of them which gives sanction to the belief that this doom can be escaped.

What is called the doctrine of Conditional Immortality finds not a few advocates and adherents, who hold that existence in the future state is exclusively for the faithful, and that the sentence to be executed upon the wicked at death or at judgment is annihilation. A different belief, termed "The Larger Hope," is maintained by others, who affirm that the punishment to which those dying impenitent are to be subjected will in time work reformation and cleansing, after which, restored to God's favour, they will enter upon a life of happiness.

It is a strong argument against such doctrines that the same word which our Lord employs to describe the permanent blessedness of the redeemed is used by Him to denote the punishment of the wicked. The reward and the punishment are both declared by Him to be everlasting or eternal. The same Greek word is in the English New Testament sometimes rendered eternal and sometimes everlasting. The portion of the righteous will be life—life everlasting; that of the wicked is described as consisting, not in annihilation or in terminable suffering, but in "everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power."[1]

While this article may be regarded as bearing upon the doom of the ungodly, it is rather to be viewed as affirming the eternal blessedness of the risen saints. The everlasting life begins on earth, but is perfected only in eternity. It is sometimes spoken of as a present possession: "He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life."[2] Again it is spoken of as a reward in futurity: "He shall receive an hundredfold now in this time . . . and in the world to come eternal life."[3] Our knowledge of what that life will be is very limited. Human words cannot describe it; human beings in this life cannot understand it. We know that it will arise from knowledge of God. Men will be

[1] 2 Thess. i. 9. [2] John v. 24. [3] Mark x. 30.

equal to the angels who see God. "Now we see through a glass darkly,"[1] but "we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is."[2]

Statements regarding the happiness of the saints are in Scripture expressed sometimes in negative and sometimes in positive terms. In the new heavens and the new earth the redeemed "shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more";[3] "There shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light."[4] Pain and sorrow and death can never touch them; they shall be delivered from perplexing doubts, from all misery and trouble. Care and anxiety shall be banished for ever, and God will wipe away all tears from every eye.

There are also many positive statements regarding the future life. Not only will there be the absence of all that is painful and productive of sorrow; those for whom it is prepared shall enter into rest. They shall possess abiding peace, and the joy of their Lord will become their own. Their bodies shall be like Christ's own glorious body, which, when transfigured on Tabor, shone as the sun, and was white as the light. They shall be satisfied, when they awake, with the Divine likeness.[5] "They shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and as the stars for ever and ever."[6] They shall sit down with Christ upon His throne, and shall be rulers over cities. "They are as the angels of God in heaven."[7] In the many mansions of the Father's house there will be a place for every saint. Each will be rewarded according to his works. Some are to be raised to higher glory than others —some are to have authority over ten cities, and some are to bear rule over five—but all the saints will be happy in the eternal enjoyment of God's favour, which is life; and of His lovingkindness, which is better than life.

[1] 1 Cor. xiii. 12. [2] 1 John iii. 2. [3] Rev. vii. 16. [4] Rev. xxii. 5. [5] Psalm xvii. 15. [6] Dan. xii. 3. [7] Matt. xxii. 30.

APPENDIX

THE following arrangement is from Professor Lumby's *History of the Creeds*. It shows that the portions of the Apostolic Creed which do not appear in the earlier forms are very few. Irenæus omits the conception by the Holy Ghost, while Tertullian inserts it. Neither Creed contains the first part of the fifth article, and in both the ninth and tenth are wanting. With these exceptions the substance of the Apostles' Creed was in circulation as early as A.D. 180.

THE APOSTLES' CREED.	CREEDS OF ST. IRENÆUS (A.D. 180).	CREEDS OF TERTULLIAN (A.D. 200).
1. I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth:	I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, who made heaven and earth;	I believe in one God, the Creator of the world, who produced all out of nothing . . .
2. And in Jesus Christ His only Son our Lord,	And in one Christ Jesus, the Son of God [our Lord],	And in the Word His Son [Jesus Christ],
3. Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary,	Who was made flesh [of the Virgin];	Who through the Spirit and Power of God the Father descended into the Virgin Mary, was made flesh in her womb, and born of her;
4. Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried,	And in His suffering [under Pontius Pilate];	Was fixed on the cross [under Pontius Pilate]; was dead and buried;
5. He descended into hell; the third day He rose again from the dead,	And in His rising from the dead;	Rose again the third day;
6. He ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty;	And in His ascension in the flesh;	Was taken into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God;
7. From thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.	And in His coming from heaven . . . that He may execute just judgment on all.	He will come to judge the wicked to eternal fire.
8. I believe in the Holy Ghost;	And in the Holy Ghost.	And in the Holy Spirit sent by Christ.
9. The Holy Catholic Church; the Communion of saints;		
10. The Forgiveness of sins;		
11. The Resurrection of the body;	And that Christ shall come from heaven to raise up all flesh . . . and to adjudge the impious and unjust . . . to eternal fire, and to give to the just and holy immortality and eternal glory.	And that Christ will, after the revival of both body and soul with the restoration of the flesh, receive His holy ones into the enjoyment of life eternal and the promises of heaven.
12. And the Life Everlasting.		

SOME BOOKS

ON

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6. *The Fatherhood of God.* By Thomas J. Crawford, D.D., Professor of Divinity in the University of Edinburgh. 1867.
7. *Theism*, being the Baird Lecture for 1876. By Robert Flint, D.D., Professor of Divinity in the University of Edinburgh. 1877.
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14. *Outlines of Christian Doctrine.* By the Rev. H. C. G. Moule, M.A. 1889.
15. *The Faith of the Gospel.* By Arthur James Mason, B.D. 1889.
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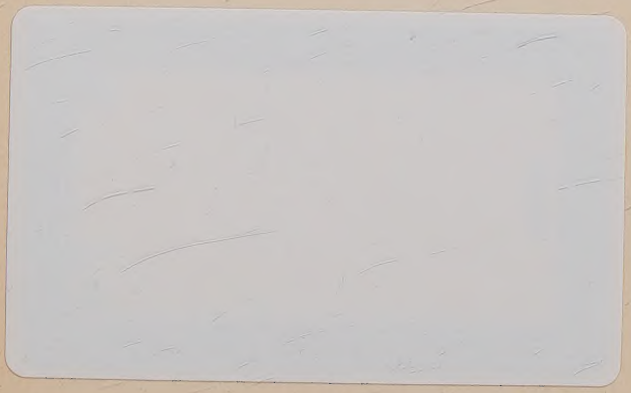

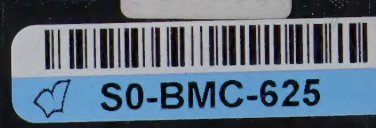
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